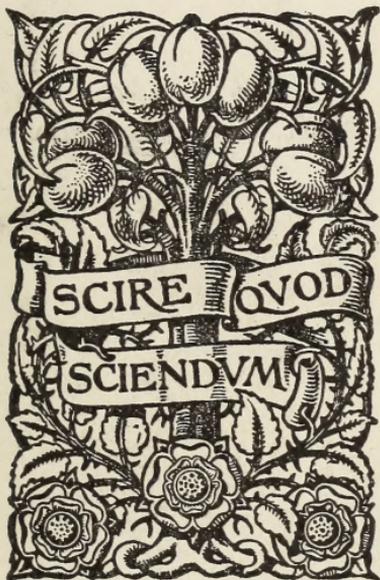


THE
NIBELUNGENLIED

TRANSLATED BY
JOHN STORER COBB

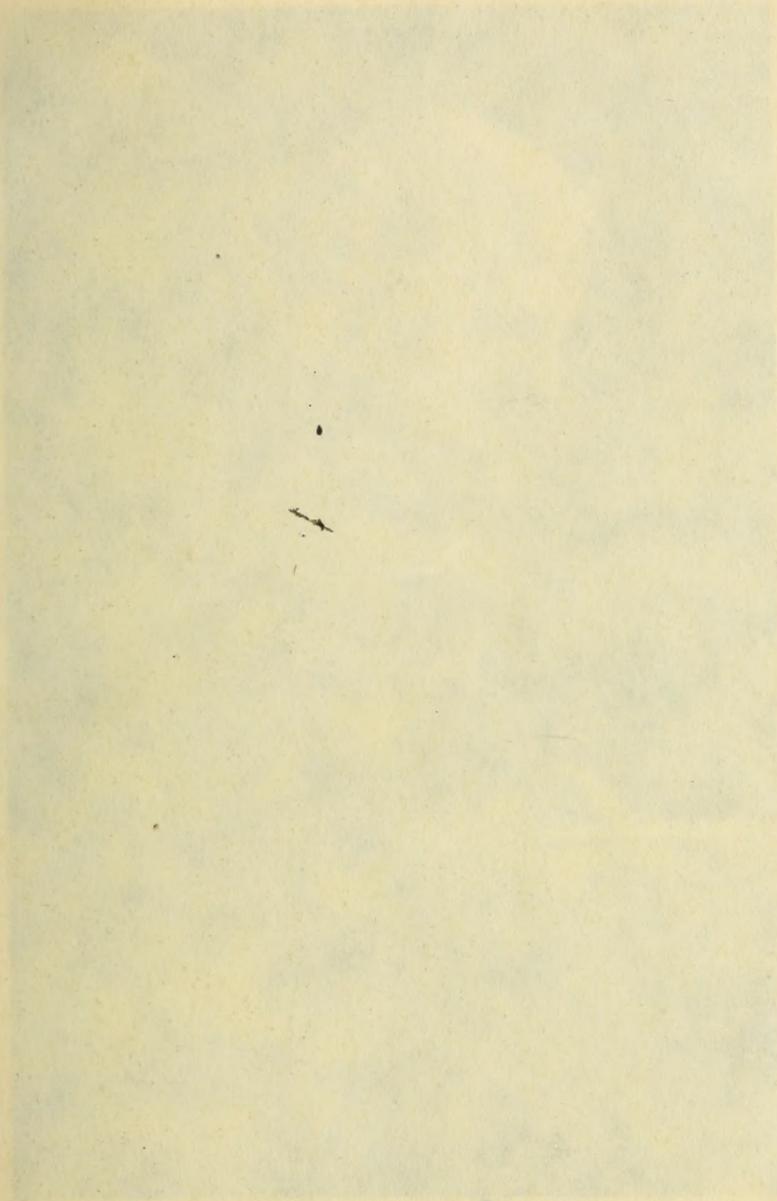


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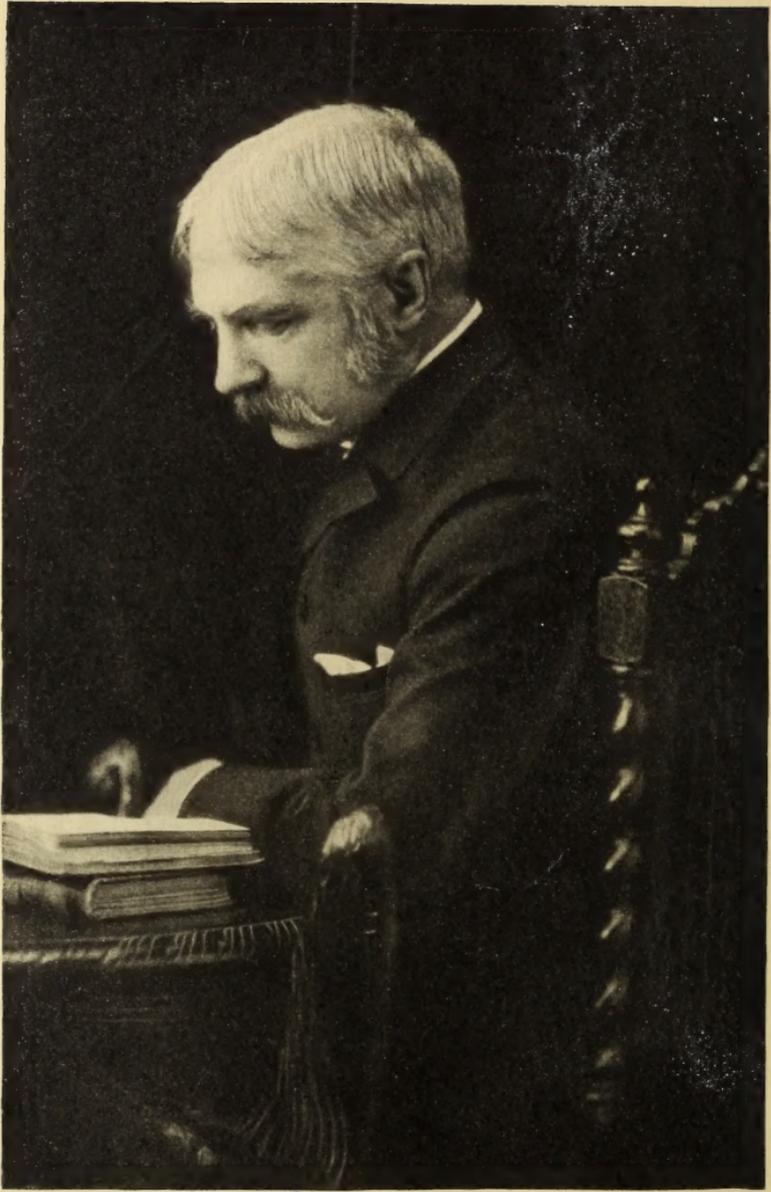
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J. How Cobb,

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NOTE

It has been a labor of love to edit my husband's version of the Nibelungenlied. At the time of his death the manuscript was so far advanced that it could be made ready to publish; but it lacked the final revision he had hoped to make, and it may well be that it contains inaccuracies which would have been rectified had he lived.

A few unfinished, pencilled pages of Introduction, begun after he was ill, will show something of what he wished to tell us of the poem itself, and of his reasons for making this new translation of it. He had worked long, and very lovingly and carefully, over this version, with a profound appreciation of the value of the great epic, which he wished to help others to know better and to value more.

MARY S. COBB.

INTRODUCTION

The Nibelungen poem is the only great national epic that the people of Europe have produced since antiquity. It is a monument of the highest interest for the history of the development of the human mind, for it permits one better than any other to divine the mysterious processes of the formation of epic poetry. It belongs not alone to Germany, but also to every country which has been peopled by Germanic tribes, for it includes the heroic traditions of the Franks, the Burgundians, and the Goths, and in it are the memorials of the ancient myths that the victorious race carried with them in quitting the Asiatic plateau. Although colored by the reflection of the Christian and chivalric ideas of the Middle Ages, it furnishes a unique picture of the manners and sentiments of primitive Germany. * * * * The first publication of a fragment of the Nibelungenlied already goes back to more than a hundred years; but Germany of the eighteenth century was not ready to appreciate this monument of the ancient genius of the Germanic race, whose savage grandeur and unpolished beauties form so great a contrast to the masterpieces of Rome and Greece. Neither was the full im-

portance comprehended of this production, which differed so much from those which had formed the classic taste. It is only since the revolt of the national spirit against the supremacy of Napoleon that the favor of the public has turned to this work of the olden times, which portrays with great vigor the martial and heroic customs of the subduers of the Roman Empire. But from this time honor is not wanting to the *Nibelungen-nöt*.^x It has become an object of the veneration of Germany, which regards it as the *Iliad* of her sons: and Art and Music, each in its turn, has been inspired by its chief episodes. It has penetrated the peasant's hut as well as the dwellings of the great; and in the same way that the heroic songs which celebrated the death of Siegfried, or Kriemhild's revenge, resounded of old wherever one of the dialects of the old Germanic idiom was spoken, so in our day the *Nibelungen-nöt* has become the common literary patrimony of all the people who make up modern Germany.

The question of the origin of this epic has given rise in Germany to discussion as instructive as, and more prolonged than, that of the origin of the Greek epic. Certainly the poem of the *Nibelungs* is far removed from the literary perfection of the *Iliad*, and, by consequence, it does not present an interest as general as the Homeric poem: but by not going back to so remote an antiquity it better permits a study of the manner in which it was composed, and the sources from which it has sprung. The profound examination of the originals of the national epics of India, of Persia, of the Middle Ages, and of primitive Germany has diffused a new light upon the

interesting problems in comparative literature. Now, of all these studies none has given results so important as that of the German epic. Here, in reality, one not only possesses a complete poem, the Nibelungen-nöt, but in addition one can follow the march of the epic tradition for more than a thousand years, from the moment when it appeared to us under the form of lyric chants, until the time when it was resolved into popular songs, which continued to be transmitted from age to age by the simple agency of the rural populations. * * * *

In preparing a new translation of the Nibelungenlied, my aim has been to contribute to an expansion of the knowledge of a work that affects us more nearly than the Iliad, for it is the product of the poetic faculties of the race to which we belong. I have followed the original, phrase by phrase, without avoiding the negligences, the obscurities, the repetitions, that it presents. In the literary monuments of primitive epochs, not less than in ancient stone inscriptions, every expression has its own value, which we are compelled to leave as it is, for the slightest change in the physiognomy of terms suffices to transport us into another time and another order of ideas.

The text of the Nibelungenlied has been the subject of extended commentaries and profound study, and I have felt myself bound to render it with most respectful exactitude. * * * *

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THE NIBELUNGENLIED

FIRST ADVENTURE

THE DREAM OF KRIEMHILDA

TRADITIONS of the olden time of marvels in abundance tell;
Of heroes worth our utmost praise, of gallantry unspeakable,
Of grand festivities and joy, of bitter plaint and scalding tear,
Of bold assaults of warriors; and now these wonders you may hear.

In Burgundy there once grew up so excellent and fair a maid,
That not in any land on earth could greater beauty be displayed.
Kriemhilda was the name she bore, and she attained such loveliness,
That many a swordsman had for her his life and name to sacrifice.

This lovely virgin to adore to no one could discredit bring,
Her hand did many a warrior seek, repulsion could in none upspring.
Most beautiful to look upon the maiden was beyond compare;
The damsel's affability all women it would grace to share.

Three kings to her as parents stood, noble all and vastly
rich;
Two were Gunther and Gernot, and each a hero hard to
match;
Then the stripling Geiselher, as choice a swordsman as
could be.
Her guardians these princes were, for sister to them all
was she.

Beneficent these monarchs were, moreover born of lofty
race:
Exceeding bold and powerful, commendable in war and
peace.
As Burgundy was recognized the country under their com-
mand;
Miracles, in after years, they all performed in Etzel's
land.

At Worms upon the Rhine abode these rulers in their pomp
and might,
And served in all the land were they by many a consequen-
tial knight,
With sterling honor and respect, as long as life for them
endured;
Until they met a sorry death, by two exalted dames pro-
cured.

As Uta was their mother known, a rich and celebrated
queen;
And their father Dankrat was, who them, in equal shares
between,
His heritage bequeathed at death; in former times a
mighty man,
Who, even in his younger days, high glory and esteem
did gain.

The three kings thus presented were, as I already have
made known,
Of wondrous might and bravery; and in subjection to
their throne
Were also noted warriors, of whom it truly hath been
said,
That powerful and bold they were, and in contention un-
dismayed.

Von Tronya Hagen was of these, to whom his brother you
may join,
The agile swordsman, Dankwart named; and then, from
Metz, Lord Ortewein.
To these append two margraves bold, who Garie were and
Eckewart,
Sir Volker likewise from Alzey, in strength without a coun-
terpart.

Purveyor Rumold, too, was there, a swordsman held in
high repute;
And Sindold and Sir Hunold both, in whom control was
absolute
Of ceremonials at the court, submissive to the king's good
will.
Still under them were warriors, the names of whom I can-
not tell.

Dankwart marshal was at court; his nephew, Ortewein of
Metz,
Served as butler to the king, and carver of the royal
meats.
Sindold bore the monarch's cup, a swordsman lofty in
renown;
Hunold was his chamberlain; and honor great to all was
shown.

Of all the glory at their court, of their enormous field of
 power,
 Their dignity and elegance, of all the knighthood there
 in flower,
 Of how these nobles were employed with satisfaction all
 their lives,
 Of these affairs can no one, now, deliver perfect narra-
 tives.

Amid these honors well sustained, Kriemhilda had a start-
 ling dream:
 She a falcon wild had reared, of shapeliness and strength
 extreme;
 Two eagles now had seized this bird, and in her dream she
 saw it done,
 And from nothing in the world could she intenser grief
 have known.

With great particularity her mother she the vision
 told,
 And she its meaning to her child in this way only could
 unfold:
 The falcon, thou hast so brought up, a noble husband
 seems to be;
 For thee may God him safely keep, or he will soon disas-
 ter see.

Oh, why do you to me discourse of husbands, dearest
 mother mine?
 Without the love of warrior, to end of life, will I
 remain.
 So beautiful will I endure, till I am ready for the
 grave,
 That from the love of any man no trouble shall I ever
 have.

Be not thou quite so sure of that, replied the mother to
her child ;
If ever thou, upon this earth, with happiness of heart be
filled,
From love of man it must arise. Thou wilt a beauteous
wife become,
If only God to thee vouchsafe a good knight's manly form
and home.

This subject let no further go, dearest mother, answered
she ;
In many a wife's estate in life is evidence from which we
see
How love can only, at the last, with grief and misery be
shared.
I such matters will avoid, and from sorrow thus be
spared.

From love's inexorable sway Kriemhilda was at present
free ;
And thus of many a happy day did this good maid the
passage see.
She all this time of no one knew who took her fancy as
a man,
Till with honor she, at length, a warrior of worth did
gain.

The falcon then was manifest, that in her dream had taken
breath,
Just as her mother had explained. Because of his untimely
death
How bloody was the recompense that she her nearest kins-
men paid !
In consequence of that one death low many a mother's son
was laid.

SECOND ADVENTURE

CONCERNING SIEGFRIED

WITHIN the Netherlands, just now, a royal youth
was earning fame;
Siegmond was his father called, and Siegelind his mother's
name.
Within a massive fort they dwelt, known around from
shore to shore;
Below upon the Rhine it stood, and Xanten was the name
it bore.

Of this young ruler I will now all the virtues let you
see;
How he from fault of every kind was always kept un-
stained and free.
A high renown and wondrous strength the hardy man did
soon obtain,
And, oh, what reputation he, throughout the world, at
once did gain!

By all as Siegfried was yclept this strenuous and noble
knight;
With many a sturdy warrior he boldly matched himself
in fight.
By energy and skilfulness to foreign lands his way he
made;
And agile swords indeed he found, when into Burgundy he
strayed.

When in the prime of life he was, and even in his earlier
days,
Siegfried did such feats perform that you the story would
amaze.
On him high honors were bestowed, and he so fair and
handsome grew
That women oft enchanted were, and at him their endear-
ments threw.

Brought up was he with tender care, as to his high degree
was due,
Ideas lofty and refined from his own mind he also
drew.
A great embellishment it was to his imperial father's
land
That he in everything became so truly great, and nobly
grand.

He now had come to such an age that he to court was bid
repair,
Where all were joyful him to see. Many a dame, and
maiden fair,
Wished ardently that he would come, forever after, day
by day.
For him they much affection felt, and he divined what in
them lay.

Seldom was the youth allowed without attendants forth to
ride;
With grand apparel him to grace his mother Siegelinda
tried;
The wisest men did him instruct, who high in dignity did
stand;
Thus easily could he secure as well the people as the
land.

He so strong had now become that arms he bore, as I have
said;
And everything that needful was, to him in plenitude was
fed.
Already he began to muse on wooing with the lasses
fair,
And all with honor might desire the comely Siegfried's
love to share.

His father, Siegmund, ordered now in all his land to be
foretold,
That he, with his devoted friends, a grand festivity would
hold.
Emitted was the news thereof in many a land of foreign
sire.
And both on natives and on guests bestowed he horses and
attire.

Wherever any might be found who could, from circum-
stance of birth,
The dignity of knighthood claim, such youths of family
and worth
Invited were into the land, that they the banquet might
attend,
Upon them, with the noble prince, the sword of honor to
suspend.

Great wonders could related be of this repast and courtly
fun.
Both Siegmund and his royal spouse, before the day had
ended, won
Unbounded honor by the gifts apportioned by them far
and wide;
Whence to them, within the land, were many aliens seen
to ride.

A full four hundred noble lads accoutred were, so it is
said,
Together with the monarch's son. Many a fair and lovely
maid
Herself exerted at the work, for favor with them he had
found.
The women many precious stones fastened on a golden
ground.

And these, with laces fine and rare, upon the drapery they
sewed,
For all these brave young warriors; an enterprise to duty
owed.
Seats erected had the host for many a brave and daring
man,
When, at solstice of the sun, Siegfried's knightly life
began.

Within the temple of the Lord many a feathered squire did
go,
And noble knights in goodly count. The elder ever rightly
do,
When they to youth their succor give, as done to them in
bygone days.
Upon the many varied sports they hoped with pleasure
now to gaze.

As, God to praise and glorify, a mass they solemnized in
song,
So rose the people round about, a mighty and expectant
throng;
And they, with honors so extreme, according to chivalric
rites,
As hard it were to see again, were formally created
knights.

Now hurried they to where they found saddled steeds in
ample crowd;
And then became, in Siegmund's court, the knightly tour-
nament so loud,
That in the palace and the hall the roar thereof was plainly
heard.
The warriors excitedly themselves in friendly strife be-
stirred.

From men of years as well as youths, rang out the sound
of many a shock,
As now the atmosphere was filled with shattered spear and
broken stock.
The flying splinters could be seen, speeding far as castle
wall;
And men and women viewed the sport, together inter-
mingled all.

The host now bade them to desist. The horses from the
ground were led,
And many a broken shield was found, though nobly borne
and stoutly made;
And precious stones, in goodly count, bespattering the
grass were seen,
Torn from the shining bucklers worn, so fierce the rivalry
had been.

At table took the guests their seats, as these to them had
been assigned;
And there allayed with regal food their lassitude of frame
and mind,
Assisted by the choicest wines, which in extreme profusion
flowed.
On native born and strangers all were honors to the full
bestowed.

In so much sport did they engage, from early morn to
sun's decline,
That those who on them had to wait from labor could no
respite gain;
They served them for the recompense, which there so lav-
ishly was found,
That over all of Siegmund's land their thankful praises did
resound.

On this occasion did the king on Siegfried, his young son,
confer
Both land and castles, as to him his father did them once
transfer;
And also to his brother knights he gave with unrestricted
hand,
Whereat the journey them rejoiced, which they had made
into his land.

These court festivities endured, without a pause, for seven
days,
When Siegelind, the wealthy queen, conforming to the
ancient ways,
Gave right and left much ruddy gold, from deep affection
for her son;
Whereby she found, as she deserved, that he the people's
love had won.

In course of time it came to pass no vagabonds were in that
land;
Abundantly bestowed on them were clothes and horses out
of hand,
As if the donors had to live no longer than a single
day.
No servants ever had been seen rewarded with such gifts
as they.

With honors of surpassing worth, an end was made of this
long play,
And famous lords of riches vast, in after times, were heard
to say
That willingly would they become the vassals of the youth-
ful knight;
But this did Siegfried not desire, that hero of transcendent
might.

So long as on the earth endured Sir Siegmund and Dame
Siegelind,
Their only son, to both so dear, to don the royal crown
declined;
Yet he aspired, with lordly hand, to nullify all harm that
could
Be apprehended for his land, with all a swordsman's hardi-
hood.

Him no one ventured to abuse, for ever since he arms first
bore,
Himself he rest had scarce allowed, this chieftain worthy
to adore.
He nothing but encounter sought, wherein, by aid of his
strong hand,
Renown he hath most justly earned, in every age and every
land.

THIRD ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGFRIED CAME TO WORMS

BUT seldom had our chieftain's heart been vexed by
any pang of love.
He once upon a time was told, there dwelt in Burgundy
above
A lovely maid, with form as fair as any one could wish to
see.
From her he soon much joy received, as well as grief and
misery.

The beauty of her face and form had made her famous far
and wide;
The tender heart and lofty soul, that in the maiden did
abide,
Encountered had so often been, by heroes in adjacent
lands,
That many guests, on her account, King Gunther had
upon his hands.

Thus many might be seen about, who would to her their
love confess;
But Kriemhild, in response thereto, could never in her
heart say yes.
Not one of them would she accept as suitor for her royal
hand;
A stranger yet to her was he beneath whose sway she soon
would stand.

And now to sacred love were turned the thoughts of Siegelinda's child;
Compared with his might other loves a passing breath of air be styled.
Full worthy to obtain was he a consort with high virtues clothed;
The noble Kriemhild, by and by, to hardy Siegfried was betrothed.

Now those to him in service bound, or friendship's fealty did grace,
Advised that, as he was inclined to yield himself to love's embrace,
His hand he should on one bestow who never could him bring to shame.
To this the gallant Siegfried said: Kriemhilda is that maiden's name,

The worthy sister of the king, who up in Burgundy doth reign,
For she is Beauty's masterpiece. I fully know and will maintain
There is on earth no prince so great, should he to matrimony lean,
That him it would not well befit to wed this young and potent queen.

The news of what was happening now fell upon King Siegmund's ear.
About it all the people talked, and thus to him was made appear
The inclination of his son; and greatly was the father grieved
That he to woo this lofty maid a disposition had conceived.

The rumor also reached the ear of Siegelind, the noble queen,
And she, perforce, for her dear child assumed an apprehensive mien;
For well did she King Gunther know, with warring hosts at his behest;
And hence was set on foot a plan to turn our hero from his quest.

Then spake the valiant Siegfried thus: Most venerated father mine,
Without a noble woman's love will I myself to live resign,
If I am not allowed to wed, in freedom, as my heart's inclined.
Whatever might to him be said could nought induce a change of mind.

If nothing thee from this can turn, composedly replied the king,
Then joyfully into thy plan myself with all my heart I bring,
And thee will help to win success, by all the means at my command.
Yet many a proud, imperious man King Gunther always has at hand.

If Hagen only should be there, a swordsman good as ever known,
Yet he so overbearing is, such arrogance hath always shown,
That verily I apprehend, we may it grievously repent,
If once to wed that princely maid we in our minds become intent.

What danger can therefrom arise? questioned Siegfried
in reply;
If he will not, in any thing, with my request in peace
comply,
I will it then, indeed, acquire by vigor of my strong right
hand,
And him I surely will subdue, and seize his people and
his land.

Thy boasting words annoy me much, replied King Siegmund to this speech;
If news of what thou now dost say the people on the Rhine
shall reach,
Permitted wilt thou never be within King Gunther's land
to go:
The brothers Gunther and Gernot from days of old I fully
know.

By none will ever be the maid with force and violence
secured,
To him King Siegmund further said, of that I fully am
assured.
If yet with warriors thou dost wish to Burgundy to make
thy way,
The friends that we about us have can ready be without
delay.

It would not to my fancy be, so mused our prince at this
design,
To have a band of warlike knights attending me upon the
Rhine,
As if an army there I led. Extremely sorry should I
be
Such means as this to utilize, to bring this noble maid to
me.

To gain her favor I will use nothing but my own right
hand ;
With only twelve associates will enter I King Gunther's
land ;
And you therein will give me help, O Siegamund, my well-
loved sire.
Then gray as well as colored stuffs his men were given
for attire.

When this intelligence received his anxious mother, Siegelind,
She instantly began to mourn at finding thus her son inclined ;
Afraid of losing her dear boy by those who wielded Gunther's spears,
This princess, regal in descent, herself gave up to grief
and tears.

The noble Siegfried then himself betook to where his mother was,
And tried to soften her alarm by kindly words and tenderness :
Dear lady, you ought not to weep because of this intent
of mine,
For I, without a shade of doubt, my foes to ruin shall
consign.

Now give to me a helping hand, that I to Burgundy may
go ;
And me and my attendant knights adorn with garments
fit to show
Upon the forms of swordsmen proud, in such an enterprise
employed ;
And you for this will ever have my heartfelt thanks and
gratitude.

If thou wilt not dissuaded be, said Siegelind, by him be-
guiled,
Thy journey I will surely aid, my only son and loving
child,
With vesture of the very best, that ever yet by knight was
worn,
For thee and thy companions all, sufficient you to well
adorn.

The hero, Siegfried, thereupon, a thankful bow did quickly
make.
I shall not on this trip, he said, with me as my attendants
take
Beyond a dozen trusty knights, for whom let garments
be prepared;
I greatly wish to ascertain how matters have with Kriem-
hild fared.

Then lovely women kept their seats the whole day long
and every night,
With scarce a moment's interlude, or thought of time's
mercurial flight,
Until, on Siegfried's full attire, the final touch had been
bestowed;
For he by no means would renounce the journey to his
love's abode.

His father bade them him adorn in belted knight's com-
plete array,
That he, in proper form and state, to Burgundy could
wend his way.
He also had light coats of mail ready made for use of
each,
With helmets of substantial make, and comely shields of
goodly reach.

And now the time for setting out to Burgundy they see
draw near;
And both the husband and the wife begin within their
hearts to fear,
Lest he should never more alive return to view his native
land.
With weapons and habiliments to lade the beasts they now
command.

Their horses were magnificent, their furniture was red
with gold;
No soul alive had better ground himself with lordliness to
hold
Than Siegfried, gallant warrior, and those who as his
escort went.
And now to start for Burgundy he asked his royal sire's
consent.

With many tears was his request conceded by the king
and queen.
He did his best to comfort both with loving act and word
serene.
Pray do not weep, he said to them, because of any plan
of mine;
You ever free from care may rest concerning me and my
design.

Now doleful were the warriors, and copious tears shed
many a maid;
Their hearts foreboded, I believe, a coming time when
they must wade
Deep in atonement's harrowing tide, because of valued
kinsmen dead.
Good reason they for sorrow had; amid affliction were they
led.

At morning of the seventh day, upon the river bank at
Worms
These bold equestrians arrived. The whole of their gay
uniforms
Was overspread with ruddy gold; well garnished, too, the
horses were,
That quietly toward their goal did Siegfried and his
convoy bear.

Their shields were all entirely new, of luminous and ample
disk,
Their helmets also beautiful, when Siegfried, valorous and
brisk,
With his attendant retinue, his entrance made in Gunther's
land;
And heroes never have been seen with garniture so rich
and grand.

The sabres carried had the tips extending almost to their
spurs;
And tapering lances also bore these well-selected cava-
liers.
Two spans in width the weapon was, that at the side of
Siegfried hung,
And had an edge so grimly keen that death it dealt
where'er it swung.

The reins were of a golden hue, by which he kept his horse
in hand;
His housings of the finest silk, as entered they the prom-
ised land.
The people, everywhere amazed, stood gaping at them as
they passed,
And forward ran King Gunther's men, a welcome warm
to manifest.

All these intrepid warriors, attendant squires as well as knights,
Made haste to meet their visitors, according to established rites,
And gladly to receive the guests within their noble prince's land.
Their horses were from them removed, and bucklers taken from the hand.

They wanted now to lead away the animals where they could rest;
But soon as Siegfried this perceived, the hero them at once addressed:
I wish the horses left with us; it will not be for very long;
We homeward soon proceed again, my resolution thus is strong.

And also I desire the shields shall not be taken from this place.
Can any one among you say where I can view your monarch's face,
Gunther, the mighty king of all, who in fair Burgundy resides?
To him did one of them reply, who well knew whither him to guide:

If you desire to find our king, right easily may that be done;
In yonder fine and spacious hall I him beheld not long ago,
Surrounded by his valorous knights. If its interior you scan,
You him undoubtedly will see, with more than one illustrious man.

To noble Gunther's princely ears intelligence was swiftly
brought,
That now within his royal court some hardy knights the
monarch sought;
That shining coats of mail they wore, and raiment fit a
lord to grace;
And also that they no one knew throughout the whole
Burgundian race.

The king was curious to learn from whence could possibly
alight
All these majestic warriors, in garments of such lustre
bright,
And carrying such useful shields, withal so very new and
broad.
But nobody could him inform, and this his Majesty an-
noyed.

At length an answer to the king gave he from Metz, Lord
Ortwein,
Who strength in plenitude possessed, and valor of an
order fine:
Since we of them no knowledge have, command that one
at once be sent
To bring my Uncle Hagen here, and them to him we will
present.

To him without exception are all foreign lands and king-
doms known:
If he these nobles recognize, their names will soon to us
be shown.
The king then bade that he be fetched, attended by his
satellites;
Sir Hagen soon, in splendid form, was seen advancing with
his knights.

Then Hagen asked with what intent the king to summon
him should deign.
Some foreign swordsmen have arrived within the bounds
of my domain,
With whom doth none acquaintance have. Hast thou, in
any far-off land,
Upon them ever set thine eyes? That, Hagen, let me
understand.

And Hagen said: I so will do. At this he to the window
walked,
And on the visitors he looked, as down below they stood
and talked.
Their lofty air was to his mind, as also were the clothes
they wore;
Yet they to him were strangers all, who thus did Bur-
gundy explore.

From wheresoever, he remarked, have come these warriors
to the Rhine,
Well might they princes be themselves, or envoys of a
princely line.
Magnificent their horses are, their raiment, too, is of the
best;
From whatsoever land they come, a hero brave is every
guest.

And Hagen more at length observed: So far as I can
understand,
Though Siegfried I have never seen in this or any other
land,
Yet in my heart I can but think, from what I see before
my eyes,
This noted swordsman it must be, who walketh there in
lordly guise.

With weighty news he doubtless comes, a visitor to your
domain.
The brave and daring Nibelungs this hero hath already
slain,
Those scions of a noble king, the bold Shilbung and Nibe-
lung;
By him have prodigies been done wherever his strong arm
hath swung.

As rode the hero all alone, with no assistance to be
had,
He at a certain mountain found, as I have often heard it
said,
About King Niblung's precious hoard, a multitude of
hardy men,
Of whom he none had ever seen, till coming here within
his ken.

The treasure of King Nibelung had hither been of late
transferred,
As taken from a mountain hole. Now heed the marvels
I have heard,
Of how the vassal Nibelungs among themselves it would
divide.
This the swordsman Siegfried saw, and his amazement
could not hide.

So near to them did he approach that he the heroes well
could see,
And him the warriors also saw. Then one exclaimed in
lofty key:
The mighty Siegfried hither comes, the hero of the Neth-
erlands.
Adventures now remarkable he found at Nibelungen
hands.

The warrior was well received by Shilbung and by Nibelung;
Unitedly entreated they this prince so eminent and young,
That he, the gallant man himself, among them would divide the hoard;
And this so earnestly they begged that he at last gave his accord.

So many precious stones he saw, as current rumor doth aver,
That not a hundred wagons all could ever from the place transfer;
With still a larger heap of gold, from out the Nibelungenland;
And now allotted this should be by Siegfried's own impartial hand.

As his reward they him allowed the Nibelungen sword to take.
Then they dissatisfied became, and at the work complaints did make,
Which thus had been so well begun by Siegfried, at their own desire.
He could not bring it to a close, for they were full of cruel ire.

In this way he was forced to let the treasure undivided stay.
Then him did savagely attack the men in those two princes' pay;
But with their own paternal sword, which long ago Balmung was named,
The Nibelungenland itself, as well as all the store, he claimed.

As able helpers in the strife, twelve men of fortitude they had,
Who muscular as giants were, but how could this their fortunes aid?
In indignation all were slain by Siegfried's overpowering hand,
And seven hundred men-at-arms he crushed from Nibelungenland,

By aid alone of that good sword, called, as I have said, Balmung.
With fright completely overcome was many a swordsman bold and young,
At once before the famous sword, and also at the stalwart man.
Of all the land and castles there he thus became custodian.

To mention now the mighty kings, he fell upon and slew them both.
Affliction then he felt himself, through Alberich the pigmy's wrath,
Who tried, on his good lords' account, in every way revenge to take,
Until to Siegfried's peerless strength entire surrender he must make.

In combat could the vigorous dwarf not manage him to override;
Like savage lions scudded both round about the mountain-side,
Where soon he Alberich deprived of his concealing hood, or cloak;
The treasure then entirely fell beneath the dreaded Siegfried's yoke.

Those who ventured thus to fight, about him now all lifeless lay.
Again did he the treasure have within the mountain stowed away,
From which the Nibelungen serfs so recently had it removed;
And Alberich, the nimble dwarf, was as its guardian approved.

But first must he, upon his oath, engage in bondage him to serve;
And nothing ever him induced, an instant, from that oath to swerve.
Such, Von Tronya Hagen said, are some of this bold hero's deeds,
And thus the might of other men this warrior's by far exceeds.

Another daring act of his has also to my knowledge come:
He once a monster dragon slew, that round about was wont to roam,
And in its blood himself he bathed, whereby his skin resembles horn.
Since then, as often hath been seen, no weapon hath his body torn.

The best advice that I can give is him to worthily receive,
And nothing do by which we might the hardy warrior agrieve.
So chivalrous of mind is he, one can but friendly him regard;
Already, by his magic strength, so many wonders he hath shared.

The mighty monarch thus replied: What thou dost say is
very true.

Observe how proudly there he stands, as if prepared to
meet his foe,

As well the valiant sword himself, as those who in his
service are!

Below we now will all proceed, and greet this soldier from
afar.

That, said Hagen, you may do, with honor to your regal
state;

Of noble stock he surely is, the offspring of a poten-
•tate.

Just now, by Jesus Christ, methinks, his mind is much
preoccupied;

And not for little things, be sure, hath he to your domin-
ions hied.

Then said again the country's lord: To him a cordial wel-
come give;

That he both brave and noble is, with certainty can I
perceive;

And this shall to his profit be, while he is on Burgundian
ground.

King Gunther then proceeded forth, and speedily he Sieg-
fried found.

The host and all his warriors gave such a greeting to the
man,

That little did the welcome lack, which heartily to him
outran.

In answer did the swordsman, then, a gracious inclination
make,

And with urbanity was seen his place among his men to
take.

I marvel much at what I hear, remarked the kindly host
offhand.

My noble Siegfried, let me know whence thou comest to
this land,

And what it is thou seekest here, in our good Worms upon
the Rhine.

To you my purpose, said the guest, I now with frankness
will resign.

To me the tidings have been brought, in my imperial
father's land,

That at your court assembled are, and this I'm glad to
understand,

The best and bravest warriors, and very oft hath this been
said,

That ever king hath yet secured. Now this is why your
ground I tread.

And to yourself, I've also heard, high bravery must be
allowed;

That never has a king been seen with greater fearlessness
endowed.

The people praise it everywhere, from end to end of this
domain,

And satisfied I cannot rest, till I its truth shall ascer-
tain.

Of gentle birth I also am, and in due time the crown shall
wear;

I hope it so may come to pass that all can truthfully de-
clare,

That I with right and justice rule, as well the people as
the land;

And I my life and honor pledge, this to uphold on every
hand.

If you be then so very brave, as common rumor doth maintain,
I do not ask, nor do I care, to whom it bringeth joy or pain;
But this I say, that I from you whatever you possess will take;
This land and all its citadels my sword to me shall subject make.

Astonished greatly was the king, and all who round about him stood,
When they had fully recognized that he was really in the mood
To capture, and appropriate, the people and the land entire;
When this his swordsmen understood, enkindled was at once their ire.

Whereby have we then merited, King Gunther queried in reply,
That what my father was allowed so long with honor to enjoy,
Should now from us be torn away by any one's superior might?
Poor evidence were this to show that we in chivalry delight.

To this the hardy man replied: From what I said I will not swerve.
Maybe the land thou hast, by force, in peace succeeded to preserve;
But I will now its ruler be. So also with my heritage,
If thou by might canst it acquire, it thus shall be thy appanage.

Thine own inheritance and mine in strict equality we'll
stake,
And which of us, by force of arms, a captive can the other
make,
To him shall everything belong, inhabitants as well as
land.
But Hagen interrupted him, and Gernot meanwhile bore
a hand.

We harbor not the least desire, said Gernot to his hardy
guest,
In order others' land to gain, with anybody to con-
test,
Or cause a single life to lose. Extremely fertile is the
land
Which rightly us obedience yields; a better no one could
desire.

In fury almost uncontrolled his kinsmen all assembled
round,
And standing firmly in their midst Sir Ortwein of Metz
was found,
Who said at length: In such a case, soft words to anger
me incite;
The mighty Siegfried calls on you, without efficient cause,
to fight.

If neither of you brothers will against him stand in self-
defence,
And though a full array of troops he had with him in
evidence,
Yet I with him would so dispute, that after this the testy
knight
Would hide his consequential airs, with best of reason, from
our sight.

These words aroused to furious wrath the hero of the Netherlands.

In strife with me, he shouted out, thou darrest not uplift thy hands;

A rich and powerful king am I; thou but the vassal of a king.

A dozen such against me dare themselves not into conflict bring.

To arms! in anger cried aloud the knight from Metz, Sir Ortewein,

Von Tronya Hagen's sister's son, who worthily adorned the line.

That he so long had silence kept, annoyance to the monarch gave.

A peaceful word now Gernot spake, a knight high-spirited and brave:

Compose this turmoil of thy soul, began he to Sir Ortewein,

The noble Siegfried yet to us hath nothing irritating done.

That we should part in amity is what most strongly I advise,

And have him ever as a friend; that truly seems to me most wise.

To this the sturdy Hagen said: It very justly vexes us,

And all thy valiant warriors, that he for altercation thus

Should travel hither to the Rhine. Why did he not remain away?

My masters never would, to him, such evil words have had to say.

To him for answer Siegfried said, that hero vigorous and
chaste:
If what I here just now remarked is not, Sir Hagen, to thy
taste,
I thee will give a chance to see how these unaided hands of
mine,
Within the land of Burgundy, to plenitude of power in-
cline.

I hope I yet can that prevent, at once replied the brave
Gernot;
And then unto his swordsmen all he ordered silence on the
spot,
In their imperious arrogance, at which vexation he dis-
played.
But Siegfried was reflecting now upon the beauty of the
maid.

How can we fitly strive with thee? demanded further Prince
Gernot;
However numerous might be the heroes there to slaughter
brought,
On us would little honor be by such unequal contest
shed.
In answer to these gentle words, Siegfried, son of Sieg-
mund, said:

Why still doth Hagen hesitate, and furthermore Sir Orte-
wein,
And not themselves, at once, to fight with their devoted
friends combine,
Of whom they, here in Burgundy, so many have of fame
and note?
But no rejoinder from them came, as had been counselled
by Gernot.

Most welcome you to us will be, remarked young Geiselher
at last,
As also will the company, that here with you its lot hath
cast ;
And glad to serve you we shall be, I and these good friends
of mine.
Thereon the guests were all supplied abundantly with Gun-
ther's wine.

Then said the ruler of the land: Now everything that we
possess,
If you in honor it demand, we will you give with cheerful-
ness ;
Our property and lives shall be, without reserve, at your
command.
The swordsman, Siegfried, then became a little more urbane
and bland.

Whatever weapons he had brought were tended with the
best of care ;
And quarters also offered him, the very best they could
secure.
For all his men were also found apartments good and suit-
able ;
And after this, in Burgundy, their presence was accept-
able.

Upon them did high honors fall, for many a quickly pass-
ing day ;
A thousand times as many more as I can now to you dis-
play.
All this he had by valor learned, as readily may be be-
lieved ;
And soon as any on him looked, within the heart he was
received.

The kings, and all the men at court, much labor on the sports bestowed ;
Yet always Siegfried was the best, whatever form the pastime showed.
Not one of them could vie with him, so overwhelming was his strength ;
He easily would cast the stone, or hurl the staff, to greater length.

According to their courtesy, in tournament these gallant knights
Before the women exercised, who revelled in the brilliant sights,
And always much rejoiced to see the hero of the Netherlands,
Whose mind was now entirely turned to what exalted love demands.

The lovely women at the court of every one they met inquired
Who this proud warrior might be, that from afar had thus appeared,
So handsome in his manly form, so graceful in his rich attire ;
And many whispered in their ears: Of Netherlands is he the sire.

He ever ready was to join in any plan that might be laid ;
And in his inmost soul he bore the image of a lovely maid.
For him the charming damsel, too, whom never yet had he beheld,
Some tender feelings entertained, carefully from all concealed.

When in the precincts of the court the exercise in arms
began,
In which both knight and squire engaged, their passages
to closely scan,
The stately and majestic queen, Kriemhilda, at her window
stood;
And she, henceforth, for other sports was never in the
slightest mood.

Had he but known that she him saw, whom in his heart he
held so dear,
Enough of joy he would have had in tilting there with her
so near.
If he had eyes upon her cast, I verily believe that
he
For nothing better on this earth would in the least desirous
be.

When he, among the heroes brave, within the courtyard
proudly stood,
As, in between the various games, is done in every neigh-
borhood,
So worthy of affection seemed the lordly son of Siegel-
lind,
That secretly did many a dame in heart regard him as a
friend.

And often he himself bethought: However can some plan
be laid,
That I my eyes may have a chance to set upon the noble
maid,
Whom I so fervently have loved for so prolonged a span
of time?
She yet to me a stranger is; on that I think with pain
sublime.

So often as these noble kings set out to travel in their
land,
Incumbent on their knights it was to be without delay at
hand;
And Siegfried also must along, which made the women
sorely grieve;
And also he, for his deep love, behind all peace of mind
must leave.

He thus among these lords abode, and nought but truth
is in my song,
Enjoying, in King Gunther's land, this festive life a whole
year long,
Without, in that expanse of time, the charming maid once
having seen,
By whom to him would speedily much joy be brought, and
suffering keen.

FOURTH ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGFRIED WITH THE SAXONS FOUGHT

DESPATCHES from a foreign land in Gunther's home
their advent made,
By messengers from far away, who had them to the kings
conveyed:
From unknown warriors they came, who them with bitter
hate pursued.
When they the tidings understood, great agitation then
ensued.

I now will tell you who they were: the name of one was
Ludiger,
Who dwelt in distant Saxony, a king of might and char-
acter;
The other was a Danish king, who bore the name of Ludi-
gast.
As ally with them in disputes was many a hardy warrior
classed.

Within the realm by Gunther ruled, as I have said, these
envoys went,
And by his stern antagonists had thitherward to him been
sent.
The unknown messengers were asked about the tidings they
had brought;
And then were bidden in all haste to go before the king
they sought.

The king received them pleasantly, and, Welcome, said, ye
envoys bold;
Concerning those who you have sent, I have not yet by
you been told;
Of that I wish to be informed. This affably the monarch
said,
Because of his relentless wrath were they prodigiously
afraid.

If you, my lord, will us permit to say what will to you
reveal
The purport of the news we bring, from you we nothing
will conceal.
The names of our respective lords, who on this errand sent
us here,
And who within your land would come, are Ludigast and
Ludiger.

Their indignation you have earned, as we have often heard
them state:
The sovereigns from whom we come, toward you bear ex-
cessive hate.
An army they intend to lead against your Worms upon
the Rhine,
With many able swords to help: as warning take these
words of mine.

Before a dozen weeks have passed, will they for setting
out be free.
If you have any trusty friends, here let them soon as-
sembled be,
The peace to help you to preserve to all your citadels and
realm;
For shattered certainly will be full many a shield and many
a helm.

If you prefer with them to treat, your inclination now
make clear,
That so their serried hosts may not to your calamity draw
near.
For if these energetic foes your land approach, on mischief
bent,
The loss of many a gallant knight distressingly will you
lament.

Just tarry but a little while, till I myself have well be-
thought;
My humor then you'll clearly know, replied the king, to
anger wrought.
If liegemen true I still possess, to them will I disclose the
whole;
At news so hard to bear as this, I with my kinsmen must
condole.

The mighty Gunther was by this ineffably disturbed and
grieved;
Within a heavy heart he bore the message thus by him
received.
He ordered Hagen to be called, and others in his confi-
dence:
And bade them also quickly go to bring his brother Gernot
hence.

Round about him flocked his best, as many as there were
at hand.
Our enemies, to them he said, intend to visit this our
land,
With armies irresistible, for which you reason have to
mourn;
It is entirely undeserved that we should thus of peace be
shorn.

We them will with our swords resist, replied the valorous
Gernot,
They only die who destined are; then let them rest below
and rot.
I cannot yet, on that account, my honor quite put out of
mind;
Our foemen shall, whene'er they come, from us a warm
reception find.

To this Von Tronya Hagen said: I do not that opinion
share;
Too overbearing in their mood are Ludigast and Ludi-
ger.
Assemble can we not our men, unless we longer time em-
brace.
And then remarked the warrior: Confer with Siegfried on
the case.

Provided were the messengers with fitting quarters in the
town.
Albeit they from foemen came, yet courtesy to them was
shown,
By mighty Gunther's own behest, and this was done saga-
ciously,
Till he had found associates, on whom for help he could
rely.

The king quite melancholy felt, as he surveyed his sorry
plight.
His woe-begone and anxious air perceived a bold and eager
knight,
Who was as yet in ignorance of what had given him dis-
tress;
He earnestly King Gunther prayed to him the reason to
confess.

I very curious am to know, at last the artless Siegfried
said,
The reason why the joyful ways so totally from you have
fled,
To which for so prolonged a time you have with us com-
mitted been.
To this the handsome Gunther gave the answer that may
now be seen :

To every man I cannot tell the sorrows and perplex-
ities
That I to carry am compelled within me like a foul dis-
ease ;
Alone to constant friends can one communicate his heart-
felt need.
Then alternated Siegfried's hue between a deathly pale
and red.

Then said he to the troubled king: Was ever aught to
you denied?
I you would succor in the grief at which so bitterly you
chide.
If friends it be that you now seek, then I will be to you
a friend ;
And trust that so I shall remain, with honor, till my life
shall end.

May God, Sir Siegfried, you reward ; much joy to me your
words impart,
And if your strength and bravery me cannot help my
foes to thwart,
Yet I rejoice to hear you say that you to me so friendly
feel ;
Awhile shall I but longer live, I surely will repay your
zeal.

To you will I communicate what so immerses me in
thought:
By envoys from my enemies, intelligence to me is
brought,
That with their armies they will come, and war upon my
country make,
Which is a thing that never yet did any swordsman under-
take.

Allow not this to trouble you, said Siegfried at his speech's
end;
Compose your agitated soul, and do as I shall recom-
mend;
Thus I will honor for you win, and profit, too, for all and
each,
Ere these impending enemies can manage your domain to
reach.

And had your stalwart foes a force of thirty thousand
men behind,
While I a thousand only had, from whom I could assist-
ance find,
I yet would dare them to confront, if you reliance place
in me.
King Gunther for this offer said that he should ever grate-
ful be.

Then of your people let me have a thousand of the bravest
men;
Since I, of those at my command, not more have now
within my ken
Than twelve intrepid warriors; with these will I defend
your land:
You ever shall be truly served by your devoted Siegfried's
hand.

And to our aid shall Hagen come, and also valiant Orte-
wein;
Dankwart and Sindold, too, we'll have, the choicest warriors
of thine.
And, furthermore, shall with us march Sir Volker of un-
daunted mind,
Who shall the royal standard bear, for no one better can
you find.

Now bid the messengers return again within their master's
land;
That speedily they us shall see, give them to clearly under-
stand;
Thereby your land and castles all unbroken peace may
still retain.
The king then ordered them to call alike his kin and vassal
men.

Back to their court again they went, these messengers of
Ludiger,
And much the journey they enjoyed, that home again did
them transfer.
The good King Gunther tendered them donations many,
rich and good;
An escort, too, he granted them, which put them in a
pleasant mood.

To them said Gunther as they left: Now notify my power-
ful foes,
They better far would leave alone the expedition they
propose.
Yet if they will me here pursue, within the borders of
my land,
And if my friends miscarry not, sore tribulation they will
find.

The costly gifts on them bestowed were to the messengers
conveyed,
Of which abundance Gunther had, and thus all obligations
paid;
And which they did not dare refuse, these messengers of
Ludiger.
Respectfully they bade adieu, rejoicing homeward to re-
pair.

Now when these high ambassadors again at Denmark had
arrived,
And when by Ludigast, the king, intelligence had been
received
Of what upon the Rhine was said; when this to him was
fully told,
Much irritated he became, a message to receive so
bold.

They said, of hardy men there was a countless host in yon-
der land,
And one among them they had seen, in presence of King
Gunther stand,
A hero of the Netherlands, who by the name of Siegfried
went.
The grief of Ludigast was great when he had news of this
event.

When into Denmark tidings came of all these men had
heard and seen,
So much the greater haste they made among them allies to
convene,
Until the monarch Ludigast full twenty thousand men or
more,
Of his most valiant warriors, had ready on his foes to
pour.

King Ludiger of Saxony his warriors also took in
 hand,
 Till fully forty thousand men, together, had they in com-
 mand,
 In readiness with them to march against the land of Bur-
 gundy.
 King Gunther, too, had taken care, throughout his prin-
 cipality,

To send to all his nearest friends, as also to his brother's
 hosts,
 To hold themselves in readiness to march from their re-
 spective posts;
 The same to Hagen's warriors. The heroes could not this
 escape.
 Thereover many swordsmen must with death a near ac-
 quaintance scrape.

Themselves they fitted for the march, and at the time of
 setting forth,
 Sir Volker had to bear the flag, a warrior of sterling
 worth;
 And when, in furtherance of their plan, they quitted
 Worms upon the Rhine,
 To Hagen's sturdy hands it fell to lead them in their grand
 design.

Sir Sindold also with them went, as likewise did the brave
 Hunold,
 Of whom had each capacity for earning much of Gunther's
 gold.
 Sir Dankwart, Hagen's brother, too, as well as Ortewein,
 were there,
 Who certainly with honor could in this bold expedition
 share.

Lord king, the hardy Siegfried said, abide you here within
your realm.

Since me your swordsmen ready are to follow, and your
foes o'erwhelm,

Remain you with the women here, and never let your
courage wane;

But trust in me to safely guard your honor, goods, and
whole domain.

From those who wish you to attack, at home in Worms
upon the Rhine,

Will I deliver you and yours, and thwart their villainous
design.

When we to their dominions come, we'll penetrate so far
inside,

That soon beneath a veil of woe their arrogance its head
shall hide.

By Hesse from the Rhine did they, with their assembled
heroes, move

Toward the land of Saxony, where soon the hosts in battle
strove.

By plunder, outrage, fire, and sword, they devastated all
the land,

And soon the haughty princes both, distress and care could
understand.

When to the marches they had come, the fighting men all
forward flew,

And then the mighty Siegfried asked of those who formed
his retinue,

Who it might be that they desired the camp attendants
to protect.

To Saxon arms could never war more dire disasters well
direct.

And thus to him responded they: Let Dankwart guard,
upon our course,
The servitors and equipage, a man he is of deeds and
force;
Our losses thus will be the less from those who serve with
Ludiger;
Let him and valiant Ortewein appointed be to guard our
rear.

I will myself ride on ahead, the soldier Siegfried said, to
scout
As near as may be to the foe, and keep a vigilant look-
out,
Till I can certain knowledge get of where the hostile forces
are.
In armor soon before them stood the son of Siegelind, the
fair.

When he was ready to advance, he put his active war-
riors
In charge of Hagen and Gernot, intrepid knights of subtle
powers.
Then rode he forth in solitude, to view the inner Saxon
land,
Where he the right intelligence, with honor presently ob-
tained.

He there beheld a mighty host that lay encampèd upon
the field,
And very greatly overmatched the total force that he could
wield;
Full forty thousand men there were, and possibly a number
more;
And Siegfried, in his hardihood, did joyfully the band
explore.

Before the hostile army, too, a bold and stalwart combatant
On sentry duty had advanced, in armor full and vigilant;
And when upon him Siegfried looked, he found that he himself was seen.
At once the other each began to view with fierce and scornful mien.

I now will tell you who it was that here was watching at the fore,
And who a glistening shield of gold upon his arm for shelter bore:
King Ludigast himself it was, who thus stood guard upon his troops.
At him the noble stranger sprang, impelled by his elated hopes.

By this time had King Ludigast him also marked with hostile bent:
Their horses both incited on, as spur into their flanks they sent;
And each his lance with violence upon the other's buckler pressed,
Whereby the stately monarch found himself stupendously distressed.

Obedient to the rowel's sting, the horses, swift as arrows, threw
Together these two angry kings, as if upon the wind they flew.
And now with bridle firmly held, they turned aside with skilful hand;
The furious pair decided then to see how luck with swords would stand.

So forcibly did Siegfried strike, the plain resounded with
the blow ;
From Ludgast's helmet vivid flashed, as did a fire within
it glow,
Effulgent sparks of radiant red, projected by his foeman's
hands :
With might and majesty he fought, the hero of the Nether-
lands.

So him, in turn, King Ludigast with many a staggering
blow did smite ;
And roughly on the shield of each, the other laid with all
his might.
By thirty of his men, at least, the royal fight had been
espied ;
But ere they could their lord assist, the victory lay on
Siegfried's side,

By means of three terrific wounds, that he inflicted on the
king,
Below his shining coat of mail, though great resistance it
could bring.
The edge of his resistless sword drew copious blood from
every wound ;
And thereby Ludigast, at length, himself in sad condition
found.

He him entreated for his life ; his land at his disposal
cast ;
And also made it known to him that he himself was Ludi-
gast.
His warriors, now, appearance made, who with vexation
had observed
The fate that had befallen each, who there as sentinel
had served.

He gladly would have borne him hence, but savagely was
set upon
By thirty of his men at once. The hand of Siegelinda's
son
Then guarded his defeated foe, with frantic blows of aw-
ful force;
And this brave swordsman very soon did greater mischief
in his course.

Of this whole band of thirty men, he put an end to all
but one,
To whom he granted liberty; who thereupon did swiftly
run,
And circulated far and wide the news of what had come
to pass;
The truth of which was manifest from his red helmet and
cuirass.

These Danish warriors were filled with misery and discon-
tent,
When they received intelligence of their commander's chas-
tisement.
His brother soon was told the news, and forcibly began to
swear,
With fury uncontrollable, as if in grief too hard to
bear.

Sir Ludigast, the vanquished king, was carried off the
battle-ground,
By Siegfried's superhuman strength, to where King Gun-
ther's men he found.
To Hagen he committed him, and when this bold and fear-
less knight
Discovered what had taken place, he fairly capered with
delight.

The men of Burgundy were told their banner on its staff
to bind.

Come on, said Siegfried, urgently; before the day is left
behind,

Much more than this shall be achieved, if life I manage
to retain.

In Saxony will this create, for many a woman, grief and
pain.

Ye gallant heroes of the Rhine, attention give, for I
aver

That I can lead you with success against the troops of
Ludiger;

And helmets broken you shall see, by stalwart heroes' ready
hand;

Before we turn us back again, affliction shall beset the
band.

To horse directly sprang Gernot and every one by him con-
trolled.

The ensign, speedily unfurled, was carried by the minstrel
bold,

Sir Volker, knight and warrior, who in advance serenely
rode.

Not one among the retinue but eager to the combat
strode.

The soldier yet had in command a band of but a thousand
men,

Beyond the dozen he had brought. Now speedily the dust
began

Along the travelled path to rise, as they across the country
strode;

And many a shield with shining rim was plain to see along
the road.

And now the Saxon leaders, too, and all their army forward sped,
With weapons of the finest make; at least so I have heard it said.
Like razors readily would cut the swords these heroes had in hand.
The bold intruders they would drive from every castle in the land.

The guard of honor to the chief, as they advanced, comprised the van;
And Siegfried also nearer drew, with all the twelve intrepid men,
That he with him had brought away when he forsook the Netherlands.
That day of storm and battle saw a multitude of bloody hands.

The hardy Sindold was on hand, with Hunold and the brave Gernot,
Who, in the combat that ensued, his life from many a hero smote,
Ere rightly estimated was their bravery and skilfulness;
Thereat shed many a noble dame abundant tears of bitterness.

Sir Volker now and Hagen add, and also valiant Ortewein,
Who hid, in that terrific fight, the gleam of many a helmet fine,
Beneath a hood of fluent blood, so bold in battle they were found;
The nimble Dankwart, too, was seen in deeds of prowess to abound.

The Danish heroes also tried their arms effectively to wield;
From heavy blows resounded loud the edge of many a shining shield.
And from the keenly sharpened blades, that hideous incisions made.
The undiscouraged Saxons, too, sad havoc with their foemen played.

The men of Burgundy pressed on, and as they crowded to the fight,
Abundantly with gaping wounds did they their foemen's zeal requite;
From all their saddles blood was seen, streaming to the earth beneath;
And so these bold heroic knights wooed honor on the field of death.

The trenchant weapons wielded there, by heroes seeking death or fame,
Resounded loud with clash and clang, as those, who from the lowlands came,
Rode on behind their trusted chiefs, in close array the fight to share;
Intrepidly advanced the twelve, as if with Siegfried one they were.

Of all who came from Burgundy, could no one with them keep the pace;
And blood about on every hand, incessantly from helm and face,
Like flowing rivulets was seen, drawn by Siegfried's potent hand,
Ere he, before his marshalled host, saw Ludiger in waiting stand.

Three times a passage to and fro he cut among their serried ranks,
Effectively from end to end. Then Hagen came and earned his thanks,
By helping him in every way to sate his mettle in the fray;
For soon did his resistless hand intrepid knights in numbers slay.

When Ludiger, the Saxon king, saw Siegfried coming on with speed,
And swinging in his powerful hand, uplifted high above his head,
The good and trusty sword Balmung, with which he there so many slew,
His gallant heart near overflowed with fury at the odious view.

With vehemence the combat raged, 'mid deaf'ning clash of angry swords,
As these two hostile phalanxes each the other rushed towards.
With eagerness so much the more each other did these warriors seek;
Both forces now began to yield; with hatred did these soldiers reek.

Now Ludiger, the Saxon chief, had been already made aware
That Ludigast a captive was, and he was hot with angry fire.
He knew not yet who conquered him, that it was Siegelinda's son;
The common voice accused Gernot; he later found who had it done.

So heavy were the blows that fell from Ludiger's vivacious sword,
That Siegfried's horse began to reel beneath the saddle of its lord;
But up again it quickly rose, and horse and rider gathered hence,
In that fierce strife of life for life, a terrible experience.

Now Hagen came to his support, Sir Dankwart also, and Gernot,
With Volker in their company; by whom was death to many brought.
And Sindold also must be named, with Hunold and Sir Ortewein,
Who, in that fearful tug of war, did foe on foe to death consign.

Unseparated in the strife the gallant princes ever were;
Above their helmets seen to go was many a swiftly flying spear,
Entirely through the shining shields, directly from the heroes' hands;
And tarnished thoroughly with blood were many showy buckler bands.

In process of this cruel strife were sundry warriors unhorsed,
And roughly cast upon the earth. Now one upon the other coursed
Sir Siegfried, full of energy, and Ludiger, the valiant king;
The arrows then began to fly, and pointed lances loud to sing.

King Ludiger's capacious shield was broken under Siegfried's hands.

And now himself the victor thought the hero of the Netherlands

Of all the sturdy Saxon host, who giving way could not avoid.

How many shining coats of mail by hardy Dankwart were destroyed!

At last King Ludiger perceived, upon the shield in Siegfried's hand,

The image of a royal crown emblazoned on its face to stand,

And knew at once, beyond a doubt, that it was he with whom he fought;

With lusty voice to his troopers, the hero then began to shout:

To this encounter put an end, all you who in my service are;

King Siegmund's valiant son it is, whom I have now confronted here;

The mighty Siegfried is the man, as I now clearly recognize;

Him hath the cursed devil here despatched to vex our Saxon eyes.

The battle at its acme was when down he had his standard brought;

And afterwards was granted him the peace that he with ardor sought.

Yet as a hostage must he go, to stay awhile in Gunther's land;

And this had all upon him come by sturdy Siegfried's able hand.

Unanimous consent obtained, the conflict to an end was brought;
And many a helmet and huge shield, all broken up and good for nought,
Were cast aside by weary hands; and all that later on were seen,
Were reddened with the wearers' blood, shed by those Burgundian men.

They captives made of all they would, and had the necessary strength.
Gernot and Hagen both took care that litters be prepared, at length,
To take the wounded from the field. Their own departure took they then,
And led as prisoners to the Rhine five hundred bold and hardy men.

The warriors who the contest lost, to Danish land a passage sought;
Since they who bore the Saxon arms had not so well in battle fought,
That praises could on them be shed; at which the heroes sadly grieved.
But those who in the conflict fell lamented were by those bereaved.

Their weapons were together brought, and thus transported to the Rhine.
For his companions it was well that they with Siegfried could combine,
Since with his own courageous hand the victory he had well achieved;
As was from Gunther's every man in undisputed terms received.

Then messengers were sent to Worms, by ordinance of
King Gernot,
Whereby unto his friends at home was information to be
brought
Of how with him affairs had gone, and also with his hardy
men;
That everything, by every one, with honor brought to pass
had been.

The varlets on their journey sped, and very quickly all
was told.
The people now were all rejoiced, whom erst did gloomi-
ness enfold,
At this most gratifying news, that unto them its way had
found.
The women, as their custom is, had curious questions to
propound,

About how matters went with those who in the monarch's
army were.
One messenger was then required before Kriemhilda to
appear;
And him in secret she received, for openly she did not
dare,
Because of one, on whom she thought with tenderness, and
loving care.

When she, within her chamber, saw the awaited messenger
draw nigh,
The beautiful Kriemhilda said, with gracious mien and
gentle sigh:
Now tell me all thy welcome news, and I will give thee of
my gold;
Narrate me all without reserve, and thee I always dear
shall hold.

How from the combat did they come, my noble brother,
brave Gernot,
And all my other valued friends? Lay many dead the
field about?
Who dealt most terribly his blows? Do not omit to tell
me that.
Then truly said the messenger: A single coward we had
not.

Yet in the fiercest of the fight was nobody who rode so
well,
Illustrious and majestic queen, if I do right such news to
tell,
As that most noble foreigner, who joined us from the Neth-
erlands.
Amazing miracles were done by valiant Siegfried's mighty
hands.

The deeds by other warriors, in that encounter carried
out,
By Dankwart, Hagen, and, indeed, by all our noble king
sent forth,
Courageously as they did fight, were nothing but a breath
of air,
Against what Siegfried realized, King Siegmund's gallant
son and heir.

Unnumbered heroes he contrived amid the fight to over-
throw ;
But no one all the prodigies to you could, in their fulness,
show,
That Siegfried unassisted worked, as he in that engage-
ment rode:
The women, for departed friends, did he with heavy sor-
row load.

The well-beloved of many a bride beneath his hand was
made to fall;
The blows that he administered, so loud upon their casques
did call,
That from within the ugly wounds the flowing blood was
freely brought;
In all respects is he a knight with bravery and goodness
fraught.

Fell deeds of note were also done by him of Metz, Sir Orte-
wein;
Whomever he should overtake, and get within his weapon's
line,
He sent below with serious wounds, or killed, more prob-
ably, outright.
And now your brother must be named, who did the foe
as sorely smite

As any one to them opposed, and much they suffered at
his hands.
One must, with the elected, show the truth exactly as it
stands.
These dignified Burgundians conducted so the enter-
prise
That, proof against scurrility, they kept their honor in
our eyes.

Before their unremitting hands were many saddles emptied
there,
While loudly did the plain resound, from many a shining
sword and spear.
The warriors from off the Rhine with such endurance rode
and fought,
That better for their foes it were if they had not the con-
flict sought.

The hardy men of Tronya, too, among the foe great havoc
 made,
 As they into the combat rode, a mighty serried caval-
 cade.
 So many there were overthrown by Hagen's unrelenting
 hand,
 That over it will much be said, in all our dear Burgundian
 land.

Sir Sindold and Sir Hunold both, knights in the army of
 Gernot,
 Aided by the brave Rumold, gave so much trouble to the
 foe,
 That Ludiger may well bewail, forever, from that fearful
 day,
 That he my masters from the Rhine compelled to enter
 that affray.

The most amazing feats of arms that happened anywhere,
 I ween,
 From first to last of that great fight, as was by everybody
 seen,
 Did Siegfried manage to perform, with his experienced
 able hand;
 Illustrious prisoners he took, whom now he brings to Gun-
 ther's land.

The warlike hero with his might did them into subjection
 bring;
 Whereof doth now King Ludigast the damage feel with
 pungent sting;
 As also doth, from Saxony, his brother Ludiger, grief
 keen.
 Now listen to my narrative, most noble and benignant
 queen.

They both were taken prisoners by Siegfried's overpowering hand;
And never yet has such a swarm of captives come into this land,
As through his sturdy bravery, we soon upon the Rhine shall see.
No information brought to her could possibly more welcome be.

Of those who bodily are sound, five hundred will, or more, be seen;
And then, of those with mortal wounds, be it known to you, O queen,
Full eighty litters red with blood are on their way to this our land;
Their inmates, nearly every one, cut down by gallant Siegfried's hand.

All those who in their arrogance would us have worried on the Rhine
Must now, as Gunther's prisoners, in dungeons, o'er their lot repine;
Our men are now conveying them, with great rejoicing, to this land.
A dainty bloom suffused her cheek when she this news did understand.

Her lovely countenance became with color of the rose imbued,
Because uninjured had emerged, from perils of such magnitude.
That lion-hearted warrior, the youthful Siegfried, good and true.
She also for her kin rejoiced, as she good reason had to do.

The lovely maiden further said: Most welcome news thou hast me brought;
For recompense thou now shalt have apparel fine, and richly wrought,
And half a score of golden marks, that I to thee will have conveyed.
From wealthy women ever will a profit from such news be made.

The man was given his reward, habiliments as well as gold.
And now did many a maiden step toward her window, to behold
What in the street was going on, and riding in procession found
The warriors victorious, who trod again Burgundian ground.

In front the healthy bravely rode, and after them the wounded came,
Whose ears the friendly greetings heard without a particle of shame.
The host advanced to meet his guests, with heart pulsating high with joy;
With happiness he now was filled, with none of former grief's alloy.

He welcomed with a royal grace his men alike with foreign guest;
It otherwise would not become a king in whom such power did rest,
Than those benignantly to thank, who had assembled at his call,
And won for him the victory in battle's awful carnival.

King Gunther, then, had all the news told to him by
faithful friends,
Of those who, on the battle-field, in death had met their
glorious ends.
Not more than sixty warriors to him were in the conflict
lost ;
And these most grievously were mourned, as often is be-
wailed such cost.

Those who uninjured home returned, transported, into
Gunther's realm,
An ample store of battered shields, and many a sadly
broken helm.
They all alighted from their steeds, on coming to the royal
hall ;
And joyfully were they received, with acclamations loud
from all.

To these incoming warriors were given quarters in the
town,
The king then bade that to his guests should hospitality
be shown ;
The wounded had he harbored well and tended with the
greatest care ;
And also showed much tenderness toward his foes assembled
there.

He thus conversed with Ludigast: I bid you welcome
heartily ;
Great injury to me has come through your envenomed per-
fidy ;
But that shall now be all repaid, if only I can so pro-
vide.
May fully God my friends reward, for well to succor me
they tried.

Well to them may you give thanks, King Ludiger to him
replied;
For captives so illustrious did never yet with king
abide.
For treatment that becomes our rank, a stintless recom-
pense we'll give,
And hope that you, toward your foes, may full of grace
and mercy live.

I will you both, the king replied, at liberty allow to
go.
But that my foes will here remain, and me no enmity will
show,
I must security demand, that they will not desert my
land,
Till peace between us is proclaimed. Thereon did each
extend his hand.

The wounded to repose were led, and skilfully their in-
juries dressed;
And soon upon inviting beds did many of them lie at
rest.
The sound abundantly were fed with healthy mead, and
grateful wine;
And soldiers who from battle came, in greater mirth were
never seen.

The shields, so terribly cut up, to safe asylum were con-
signed;
Of saddles, all befouled with blood, were also many thus
enshrined.
In this way all secreted were, that tender women might
not weep;
And many a weary knight was seen, with halting step, his
way to keep.

To carefully regard his guests, was ordered by the gracious king;
Of foreigners and native born, the land was full to suffering.
For all enduring dangerous wounds, provided he the best of care;
However great their arrogance, a milder form it now did bear.

The learned in the leech's art had sums enormous to them tolled,
Of silver in unheeded weight, and also lavishly of gold,
When they the heroes had restored, from all the evils of the war:
Moreover, to the visitors, the monarch princely presents bore.

All those who now desirous were, their homeward journey to begin,
Were bidden to prolong their stay, as with a valued friend is done.
The king a consultation had on how he could the men reward,
By whom, with honor, had his will been carried out, in such accord.

At this Gernot, his brother, said: Allow them now to freely go,
But let them also be informed, that, when six weeks away shall flow,
You wish them hither to return, to grace a banquet you will hold;
Thereby were several restored, who suffered now from wounds untold.

Then asked permission to depart Sir Siegfried of the
Netherlands;
But when King Gunther was informed that he had issued
such demands,
He urged him in all friendliness still longer with him to
remain.
Unless for Kriemhild it had been his pleading would have
been in vain.

Too mighty far was he and rich, to offer him emolu-
ment,
However well he had it earned. The monarch's love to
him outwent,
As well as that of all his kin, who in a body had per-
ceived
What he with unassisted hand had on the battle-field
achieved.

So he decided to remain, and all because of that fair
maid:
Quite possibly he might her see. In course of time this
came to pass.
According to his strong desire, into her presence he was
led;
Then joyfully he rode away, and to his father's country
sped.

The host entreated every day them all to practise knightly
games;
And many of the younger ones with joy asserted thus their
claims.
He also seats erected had, in front of Worms, upon the
strand,
For everybody who might come within his dear Burgun-
dian land.

When now the period drew near for them appearance there
to make,
To her did fair Kriemhilda's maids the gratifying tidings
break,
That he a royal festival to his devoted friends would
give.
And then the courtly ladies all, with industry supreme did
strive

Themselves with raiment to provide, at this important
feast to wear.
The great Queen Uta was informed of everything with
zealous care,
Concerning the exalted knights, who were expected to at-
tend.
And from enclosures were removed superb attire without
end.

Because her children she adored were these habiliments
outlaid,
Wherewith she gorgeously adorned full many a dame and
lovely maid,
As well as youthful warrior, belonging to Burgundian
land.
And for the numerous strangers, too, was rich apparel put
in hand.

FIFTH ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGFRIED FIRST KRIEMHILDA SAW

NOW journeying toward the Rhine were day by day
the heroes seen,
Who would in this festivity participate with pleasure
keen,
And out of friendship for the king were now arriving in
the land.
Upon them all were freely showered both horses and ap-
parel grand.

Great preparation, too, was made to have in order seats
for all
Who best and most exalted were, as we distinctly can
recall
Of two and thirty potentates, who graced the feast in fine
array.
The women with each other vied in their adornments for
the day.

In occupation now was seen without repose young Giesel-
her;
Both residents and foreigners did he receive within his
care,
With his brother, King Gernot, and those attending on the
two.
Well greeted were the soldiers all, as in all honor was
their due.

Many saddles red with gold were borne by them within
the land;
And richly decorated shields, with clothes the finest at
command,
They carried with them to the Rhine to that sublime fes-
tivity.
The sick in numbers here began to feel renewed vital-
ity.

All those who badly wounded were, and on their couches
had to lie,
Could in their happiness forget how bitter it may be to
die.
To those who sick and feeble were did no one now atten-
tion pay;
But each, with pleasure unalloyed, thought only of the
festal day,

How they in mirth and gaiety the contemplated time would
spend.
Supreme and limitless delight, hilarity which had no
end,
Had fully taken hold of all and filled them up on every
hand.
Excessive joyousness arose within the whole of Gunther's
land.

On Sabbath morn, at Pentecost, they every one appearance
made,
Attired in full magnificence, of swordsmen choice a fine
parade,
Five thousand quite, or even more, advancing to the fes-
tival.
In rivalry the plays began, and soon the sport was gen-
eral.

The royal host had in his mind what long ago perception
 gained,
 With what a true and loyal heart the hero of the Nether-
 land
 His sister Kriemhild deeply loved, whom he had never yet
 beheld,
 Whose beauty higher in esteem than that of other maids
 was held.

My lieges and my kin, he said, assemble and deliber-
 ate
 On how we most acceptably this festival can cele-
 brate,
 That we may not, in future days, have any cause to suffer
 blame.
 For only by accomplishment can one acquire enduring
 fame.

Then to the king said he from Metz, the warrior, Sir
 Ortwein:
 If from this festival you wish the greatest glory to ob-
 tain,
 Then let among your chosen guests the beauty of our
 maids appear,
 Of which, within all Burgundy, so much is said with pride
 sincere.

For what to man is highest bliss, or him to effort most
 inflames,
 If not the beauty of our maids, the stately presence of our
 dames?
 So bid your lovely sister come and take her place among
 your guests.
 Of numerous heroes this advice with satisfaction filled the
 breasts.

With pleasure that will I have done, replied the king to
Ortewein.

On all who heard this answer made, it acted like refresh-
ing wine.

To Mistress Uta sent he word that with her daughter she
should come

To court with all their womenfolk, and thereby dissipate
their gloom.

Examined well were all the chests, the best apparel there
to find;

And overlooked was not a dress whose garnish satisfied the
mind,

Or laces, bands, or jewelry; of which enough was soon
outlaid

To decorate full gorgeously the form of every lovely
maid.

Now many a youthful warrior desired exceedingly that
day

That favor he might haply find in some exalted maiden's
eye,

For which he willingly would give the richest empire on
the earth.

And those who never met before acquaintance made amid
the mirth.

Then ordered this powerful king a hundred of his chosen
knights

His sister and her mother seek, and, in accord with ancient
rites,

Attendant on them to remain, and ever with the sword in
hand.

Such was a royal retinue within the whole Burgundian
land.

Approaching now with her in state the regal Uta might
be seen,
Attended by her noble dames, as chosen by her they had
been ;
A hundred of them, more or less, in gorgeous dresses all
attired.
And Kriemhild in her following had many maidens much
admired.

Out from the women's residence they all together now
emerged ;
At once the heroes in a crowd closely round about them
surged,
And loitered in the neighborhood, hoping it might come
to pass
That peradventure they might have a chance to see the
noble lass.

At last the fair one came in sight, as comes the rosy morn-
ing dawn
From sombre clouds in eastern sky. Anxiety was now with-
drawn
From him who had for such a time her idolized within
his heart.
For now he saw before his eyes the maid without a counter-
part.

Her raiment sparkled as she went with many a noble,
costly stone ;
Her countenance of rosy hue with dawning love's efful-
gence shone.
Whatever might be one's desire, yet one perforce could
but concede
That never he upon this earth such peerless beauty had
surveyed.

As doth the brilliance of the moon the lustre of the stars
excel,
When she her light, so clear and pure, from misty darkness
doth propel,
Just so did she, in solemn truth, all other maidens far
transcend;
And up thereby the heroes found to altitudes their souls
ascend.

The most exalted chamberlains before her marched with
solemn step;
The bold, impetuous warriors no longer could their pa-
tience keep;
They crowded up intent to see this maiden of so many
charms;
While Siegfried thus distracted was between his love and
its alarms.

He thought within his troubled heart: How ventured ever
I to dream
Of wooing such an one as thou? 'Tis naught but crazi-
ness supreme.
And yet than have to give thee up more willingly would
I be dead.
With agitation from his thoughts he got in turns both
white and red.

The son of Siegelind appeared, as fondly he Kriemhilda
faced,
As if had been his graceful form upon a parchment sur-
face traced
By some good master's skilful hand. And every one did
freely grant
That never had he in his life a hero seen so ele-
gant.

Now those who with Kriemhilda went, commanded all along
her track,
On every hand, to clear the way. At this the warriors all
fell back ;
These high and noble-hearted dames greatly they rejoiced
to see,
For many a matron there was found, of famous race and
pedigree

Just now remarked, with fine address, the King of Bur-
gundy, Gernot :
For that brave hero, who to thee his services so grandly
brought,
Do thou, dear brother Gunther, now some suitable reward
proclaim,
Before all these proud warriors. This counsel never will
me shame.

Bid Siegfried of the Netherlands before our sister to ap-
proach,
That him the maiden may salute, which ever us must
profit much ;
Let her, who never greeted knight, with salutations him
draw near ;
That so we may this swordsman fine obtain as ally and
compeer.

The monarch's kinsmen sally forth, and him discover as he
stands ;
And with this message they address the soldier from the
Netherlands :
The king doth you by us, sir knight, to visit him at court
request,
That you his sister may salute ; with honor would he you
invest.

The swordsman, at these gracious words, felt reassurance
and relief ;
He carried now within his heart the purest joy without
a grief,
Because for him the time had come Queen Uta's lovely
child to see.
With charming modesty and grace she him received with
inward glee.

When she the fine, courageous man standing in her pres-
ence saw,
The color deepened in her face. She said, with mingled
love and awe,
Sir Siegfried, I thee welcome bid, thou noble and intrepid
knight.
When he this salutation heard his courage took an upward
flight.

A ceremonious bow he made as he to her his thanks ex-
pressed,
Thereon together they were drawn by ardent love's allur-
ing quest.
As each upon the other looked their eyes were glowing
with desire ;
But from the hero and the maid was hidden this consuming
fire.

Whether her white, inspiring hand was pressed by him in
gentle wise,
When first he felt its thrilling touch, is hidden from my
asking eyes.
I am not able to believe that he neglected so to
do ;
For hearts athirsting after love would thus to nature be
untrue.

Not in the time of summer's warmth, nor in the days of
genial May,
Would ever he within his heart again experience the
sway
Of such exhilarating joy as that which through his being
flew,
When she her hand within his placed whom he desired in
soul to woo.

And many a warrior also thought: Oh, would to me it so
had gone,
That I might thus beside her walk as he doth now before
me dawn;
Or by her side myself recline, as I could do with joy so
keen.
There never was a warrior yet, in service of so good a
queen.

Of whatsoever monarch's land an honored guest might
chance to be
Of all comprised within that hall, these two were all that
he could see.
Permitted then was she to kiss the handsome and intrepid
knight;
And never in his life had he encountered aught of such
delight.

When this auspicious moment came, the King of Denmark
warmly said:
In this high salutation's cause lies many a gallant hero
dead,
As I good reason have to know, from injuries at Siegfried's
hand;
May God permit him nevermore to come into our Danish
land.

The populace was everywhere commanded now the road
to clear,
To let the lovely Kriemhild pass; and many a valiant
cavalier,
In brilliant uniform, was seen within the church with her
to go;
Where soon was this heroic knight compelled to her to
bid adieu.

Advanced she to the minster now, with many women in
her train,
Where, in apparel so superb appeared before them now
this queen,
That many found who on her looked themselves in ad-
miration lost;
And many a hero felt delight when she his eyes did first
accost.

But Siegfried found it hard to wait until the mass had
all been sung.
Himself he might felicitate, since thereupon all gladness
hung,
That she, whom in his heart he bore, had now at last his
love returned
In balanced share with his for her: a recompense he well
had earned.

As she, when mass concluded was, in front of the cathedral
came,
Once more was summoned to her side this champion of
noble fame.
And then, before he aught could say, the lovely maid her
thanks began,
That he before those warriors such honor in the strife had
won.

May God, Sir Siegfried, thee reward, began to say the
lovely child,
For having so well merited that all these warriors should
be filled,
In best of faith, with love for thee, as nearly all to me
have owned.
Upon Kriemhilda he began to gaze with searching eyes
and fond.

Forevermore will I them serve, said Siegfried, the un-
daunted knight,
And never shall this head of mine repose enjoy, however
slight,
Until their wish has been fulfilled, however long my life
may be.
This, Lady Kriemhild, will I do because your love you
give to me.

Until a dozen days had passed, as oft as darkness merged
in light,
The lovely maiden might be seen escorted by the gallant
knight,
As she toward the monarch's court her way with her at-
tendants made.
This service was, at love's demand, upon the valiant warrior
laid.

The noise of pleasure and delight, the sound of many a
clashing sword,
Before King Gunther's stately hall could every passing
day be heard.
Within, without, were sports enjoyed by hardy men who
thither swarmed.
By Ortwein and Hagen both were wonders not a few per-
formed.

Whatever one should wish to do at once were seen thereto
bedight,
A more than requisite supply of swordsmen known for
skill in fight;
The warriors then before the guests their quality made
fully known.
And every part of Gunther's land was honored by the
valor shown.

Those long disabled by their wounds now ventured out to
seek the air;
For, with the servants of the king, they wanted in the
fun to share;
To get themselves behind their shields, in rivalry to hurl
the shaft.
Therein received they able help; the weapons strongly did
they waft.

So long as festal days endured, the royal host had every
guest
With best of eating well supplied; for on the king must
never rest
The very smallest trace of blame that possibly might be
incurred.
He to and fro among his guests with suavity himself
bestirred.

Ye knights and warriors, he said, before you go away from
here,
Some trifling gifts from me accept, that so to you it may
appear
How grateful I shall ever be. Scorn not the goods that
I possess,
Which now among you to divide will consummate my
happiness.

To this the men of Denmark said, in quick rejoinder to his word:
 Before we hence our exit make, our native land again to gird,
 A lasting peace to us vouchsafe. This now is our most urgent need;
 For by your stalwart warriors do many of our friends lie dead.

Recovered from his injuries, King Ludigast was soon revealed;
 And also was the Saxon king of all his wounds right quickly healed;
 Yet several who met their death within the land they left behind.
 Thereon King Gunther went away to where he Siegfried hoped to find.

The knight he found, and to him said: Advise me now what I shall do.
 To-morrow morning will our guests from this my country homeward go;
 And now they application make for terms of peace with me and mine;
 Now let me know, intrepid knight, what seemeth thee had best be done.

What they have offered in return, to thee I'll state without reserve:
 As great a weight of solid gold as scarce five hundred steeds can move,
 To me they say they'll freely give if I a pact of peace will sign.
 But Siegfried said: An act like this were very bad for thee and thine.

Allow them both from here to go untrammelled by atone-
ment's price;
If only that, in time to come, may naught these warriors
entice
To make another hostile raid upon your castles and your
lands.
And, as a guarantee for this, accept the noble monarchs'
hands.

I will follow thy advice. Thus parted they and went their
ways.
To Gunther's regal enemies it known was made, to their
amaze,
That no one would accept the gold that they but lately
proffered had.
At home were their devoted friends for these two weary
chieftains sad.

Full many a treasure-laden shield was hither brought by
willing hands;
And this, uncounted and unweighed, divided was among
his friends;
To every one five hundred marks, to many even more, were
brought;
As had to Gunther been advised by that intrepid knight,
Gernot.

They all for their dismissal sued, for they were anxious
thence to go.
And every one where Kriemhild was, himself at once was
seen to show,
Where too her mother at her side the queen, Dame Uta,
also sat.
The swordsmen all were sent away without a sign of bitter
hate.

Apartments many left they void when thence away for
home they rode.

This, notwithstanding, in the land the monarch and his men
abode

In sumptuous magnificence, with many a noble knight as
well;

And every day they sallied forth to where did then Kriem-
hilda dwell.

The hero, Siegfried, also would away from there for home
depart;

For he was sunken in despair of getting what was next
his heart.

The king was duly notified that he his homeward way would
find;

But him the youthful Geiselher prevailed upon to change
his mind.

Whither, Siegfried, noble friend, whither would you wend
your way?

Listen to my earnest prayer, and with our valiant warriors
stay;

With Gunther our illustrious king, and all who homage
to him take.

Here many lovely women dwell who fain would your ac-
quaintance make.

In answer thereto Siegfried said: I then will let the horses
stay.

I did intend from here to ride, but that desire has passed
away.

And also take away the shields; I would to my own land
have gone,

But Geiselher from that intent hath me with loyalty with-
drawn.

So there, from love, the hardy man with his devoted friend
remained ;
And not in any other place, if he had sought throughout
the land,
More happily could he have dwelt. From this event it
came to pass
That he could daily feast his eyes upon Kriemhilda's lovely
face.

For her great beauty's sake it was, that he decided there
to stay.
With every kind of manly sport the time was made to
pass away.
By love alone was he impelled, and often this an anguish
proved.
Through it the hero afterward was wretchedly by death
removed.

SIXTH ADVENTURE

HOW GUNTHER SOUGHT BRUNHILD IN ISENLAND

A GAIN we find important news in circulation from the
Rhine;
How many maidens there were found for worshipping at
Beauty's shrine.
A consort for himself to gain, incessantly King Gunther
dreamed;
Which to his lords and warriors a worthy undertaking
seemed.

A certain celebrated queen a throne possessed across the
sea;
And not in her entire domain was any one of her de-
gree.
Her beauty was beyond compare, her vigor also very
great;
With swiftest warriors did she, on love's account, with lance
compete.

Long distances she hurled the stone, and after it did
nimble bound;
And who should dare her love to seek, without a failure
must be found,
Three times against the noble maid, well able to sustain the
lead.
Should he but once behind her come, the price he paid
with loss of head.

The royal damsel many times in such attempt success had
won.
And this had heard, upon the Rhine, a skilful knight and
nobleman,
Whose contemplations on herself the lovely woman did
entice;
For whom had many a warrior his life been forced to
sacrifice.

As, once upon a time, the king had taken with his men
his seat,
On every side it soon became debated back and forth with
heat,
What kind of woman could their lord most fitly for his
consort take;
Who for himself would best a wife, and for his land a
mistress make.

Then said the monarch of the Rhine: Across the sea I now
will sail,
And ardently Brunhilda seek, whatever there may me be-
fall.
Against her beauty I will risk my cherished honor and
my life;
And for her sake I both will lose if she will not become
my wife.

Against this plan I you advise, did Siegfried promptly
intervene;
For ways so horrible and fierce in practice puts this noble
queen
That he who her aspires to woo too high a price by far
must pay;
Wherefore it best will be for you this trip to endlessly
delay.

Then said King Gunther yet again: The woman never yet
was born,
With such audacity and strength that I in combat cannot
scorn,
And easily reduce to terms, by dint alone of my right
hand.
Be silent, Siegfried quickly said, you do not her yet under-
stand.

If you the equal were of four, you could yourself not
thereby save
From such ferocity as hers. That your intention you
should waive
Is therefore my advice to you. If you a speedy death would
shun,
Do not, for any love for her, such unavailing hazard
run.

However great her strength may be, the journey I will
surely take.
And seek Brunhilda in her home, whate'er may follow in
its wake.
Because of her great loveliness the venture I will not
decline;
And possibly, if God permit, she us will follow to the
Rhine.

To you I then would recommend, Sir Hagen interjected
here,
That Siegfried you at once entreat, impartially with you
to bear
The burden of the enterprise. This course appears to
me the best,
For he to Brunhild's character so full a knowledge hath
confessed.

Wilt thou, requested then the king, my noble Siegfried,
with me go,
And help to woo this lovely maid? This favor do on me
bestow;
And if the damsel's love I win, and she consent to be my
wife,
Then I will hazard for thy sake my goods, my honor, and
my life.

In answer to this earnest suit, Sir Siegfried, son of Siegmund, said:
I will it do if you will me as my endeavor's full reward,
Your lovely sister Kriemhild give, that beautiful, majestic queen.
No further thanks shall I demand, whatever labors I have seen.

I firmly promise, Gunther said, my noble Siegfried, on thy hand,
If beautiful Brunhilda come, and here abide within my land,
That I will thee my sister give, to be thy good and faithful wife;
And may thou with that winsome maid forever lead a happy life.

To one another gave their oaths these two intrepid warriors.
Rough work they soon experienced, and often spent distressing hours
Before they this exalted queen escorted back upon the Rhine.
The matter oft the hardy men to harsh conditions did consign.

Of savage and ferocious dwarfs, on some occasions have I
heard,
Inhabiting the mountain caves, who for defence their
bodies gird
With cloaks that are tarnkappe called, of wonderful ca-
pacities.
Whoever one of these doth wear is safe against fatali-
ties

From injuries by sword or spear. The wearer is removed
from sight
So long as he therein remains. Though he can hear and
use the light
Without restraint upon his will, yet he by none can be
perceived.
His strength is also much increased, as I the story have
received.

Now Siegfried, when he thither went, about him bore the
mystic cloak
That with his skilful swordsmanship the energetic war-
rior took
Away from that most powerful dwarf, whom we as Albe-
rich have seen.
Now hastened these bold warriors to pay their visit to
the queen.

Whenever hardy Siegfried chose to put his weird tarn-
kappe on,
Beneath its strange, mysterious sway, he so much resolu-
tion won
That he could match a dozen men, as often I have heard
it said.
Thus he with great dexterity discomfited the queenly
maid.

This mist-enfolding drapery constructed was in such a
way
That whosoever put it on was able, in the open
day,
To do whatever he desired without a chance of being
seen.
Therewith he Brunhild overcame, by whom he disciplined
has been.

Now, Siegfried, let me be informed, ere we upon this jour-
ney go,
How we, in proper dignity, our way across the sea shall
plough.
Shall swordsmen us accompany within the fair Brunhilda's
land?
Thirty thousand fighting men can soon equipped before
us stand.

However many men we take, responded Siegfried to the
king,
Such cruel and ferocious ways the queen will into usage
bring
That every one would disappear before her brutal arro-
gance.
A better plan will I suggest for us, O swordsman, to
advance.

Like knightly heroes let us go, and travel down below the
Rhine;
And with us suffer only those whom now to you will I
define.
Just you and I and two besides, and not a single comrade
more;
That we this maiden may acquire, whatever after be in
store.

Of these companions I am one, as you of course will also
be ;
Let Hagen as another come, and we prosperity shall
see.
As fourth Sir Dankwart we will take, a man forever bold
and sage.
With us combined a thousand men will never dare in strife
engage.

I gladly now would be informed, the king again in turn
replied,
Before we hence our exit make, as I shall do with joy
and pride,
What kind of raiment shall we take that we before Brun-
hild can wear,
Befitting to the time and place? I that would also like
to hear.

Apparel of the very best that anywhere can be ob-
tained,
On all occasions must be worn by travellers in Brunhilda's
land.
So let us then our richest garb before the noble woman
wear ;
That, if our story shall be told, we no reproach may have
to bear.

The gallant soldier then replied: I myself at once will
go,
My noble mother to implore, that she will graciously
allow
Her maidens to our help to come, by getting such attire
in hand,
As we, with good repute, can wear within the royal maiden's
land.

Von Tronya Hagen then remarked, with painfully respectful air:

Why your mother should you ask a burden such as this to bear?

Let your sister be informed of what you have a wish to do;

For she is talented enough, and good apparel will bestow.

He therefore had his sister told that he was anxious her to see,

And Siegfried had the same desire. Ere she permitted that to be

The beauty had herself arrayed in vesture rich as she possessed;

Nor at the coming of these lords was she a particle distressed.

Her household also was attired as suited one so near the throne;

The princes both their advent made, and when this unto her was known,

At once she from her seat arose, and affably advanced to meet

The celebrated foreigner, whom she did with her brother greet.

Welcome art thou, brother mine, and welcome thy companion, too;

I now would gladly ascertain, the maiden said, as near she drew,

What it is my lords may wish that to my court to come they deign.

How I can be of use to you, pray, noble warriors, now explain.

Without delay King Gunther said: My lady, I will tell
you all;
A serious task we have in hand, which doth upon our
courage call;
A-wooing we desire to go within a distant foreign
land,
And for our trip would gladly have apparel sumptuous
and grand.

Now sit you down, my brother dear, replied the maid of
high degree,
And let me first be made aware of what the women's names
may be,
To whom attention you would pay within another monarch's
land.
Thereon these valued warriors the maiden both took by the
hand,

And them conducted to the place where she had just be-
fore reclined
Upon a couch of stately ease, as I distinctly bear in
mind,
On which were figures in relief elaborately worked in
gold.
And with the lady well might they a pleasant conversation
hold.

Glances full of tenderness, from which regard was not
estranged,
Might happen well between the two with frequency to be
exchanged.
He carried her within his heart, who dearer was to him
than life;
And he by valiant services gained her consent to be his
wife.

Then said the noble king to her: Thou much beloved
sister mine,
My plan can never be achieved unless we have some help
of thine.
Some great adventures we will seek within the fair Brun-
hilda's land;
And fine apparel we must have ere we before her women
stand.

The princess thus replied to him: Thou much beloved
brother mine,
If any help that I can give will expedite this quest of
thine,
With certainty thou mayest know that such assistance shall
be had.
Should any one thee this deny, Kriemhilda would be vexed
and sad.

You should not, most exalted knights, in apprehension
favors ask;
You should to me commands express without a beggar's
dastard mask.
Whatever you may wish to have, you need but speak to
be obeyed;
With pleasure shall I do your will, benignantly replied
the maid.

Our chief desire, dear sister, is that we may good apparel
wear,
And thy own white, unsullied hand we wish to help us it
prepare.
Pray let your women so contrive that our intention they
may serve,
For we persuaded cannot be from our projected tour to
swerve.

The damsel then again began: Now listen well to what
I say;
I have myself a store of silk; so order now a good ar-
ray
Of jewels here upon the shields, and soon can raiment be
displayed
In which with honor you may go and pay respect to your
fair maid.

Who his associates might be, the princess further sought
to know,
As they attire must also have, presentably to court to
go.
I and Siegfried, said the king, and we shall take but two
beside;
Sir Hagen and Dankwart alone with us to Brunhild's court
will ride.

Now pay attention, sister dear, to everything we say to
you;
Take care that we compatriots are able in four days to
show
Three sets of garments fit for each, all woven of the finest
stuff;
That we, on reaching Brunhild's land, no reason have to
fear rebuff.

This promised she the warriors, who then departing might
be seen.
As soon as they had disappeared, Kriemhilda, royal maid
and queen,
Had from their habitations called thirty damsels of her
suite,
Who had for this artistic work invention great and fingers
fleet.

The finest of Arabian silks, as white as freshly fallen
snow,
And excellent from Zazamank, as green as clover leaves in
glow,
Did they inlay with precious stones, and furnish a superb
attire.
The royal maid, with her own hands, its cut and fashion
did inspire.

Linings were to them supplied from skins of fishes rarely
seen,
And foreign to the people looked every one that used had
been;
And these were overlaid with silk, manipulated all with
gold;
And one could tell of this attire wonders great and mani-
fold.

Then from the hot Morocco land, as well as from the
Libyan shore,
Were silks employed, of quality as fine as ever seen be-
fore
In hands of any royal maid; of which they had a good
supply.
And Kriemhild let them plainly see that on her love they
could rely.

Since they apparel so superb for their projected trip de-
sired,
The fur of ermine seemed to her undoubtedly to be re-
quired,
On which, in carbon's ebon hue, the spots in regal beauty
lay.
All brightly heroes gladly wear such garments on a festal
day.

In settings of Arabian gold did many a jewel scintillate.
Incessant was the women's toil; their application also great,
For at the end of seven weeks was their apparel all prepared;
And weapons for the warriors, for which they also well had cared.

When they were thoroughly equipped, upon the surface of the Rhine,
Constructed with rapidity, a little sturdy boat was seen,
In which were they to be conveyed below toward the open sea.
The noble maidens from their work debilitated seemed to be.

It now was told the warriors that all the beautiful attire
Was ready for their instant use, which they about them would require.
Their wishes had been carried out, according to expressed design;
So they not any longer need prolong their sojourn at the Rhine.

Soon afterward a messenger to these confederates was sent,
To know if they desired to see the new apparel for them meant,
And try it on to ascertain if it were either short or long.
They thanked the women earnestly, and nothing in the least found wrong.

Wherever happened they to be, must freely every one
admit
They never on the earth had seen attire of better style
or fit.
Of garments better for a knight has no one ever found
report.
Thereon they satisfaction felt at having it to wear at
court.

The noble maids who did the work received therefor abundant thanks.
The hardy warriors desired at once to go to Island's banks.
In knightly fashion started they, as soon as their adieus were said;
At which was many a shining eye bedewed with tears and sadly red.

My brother dear, the maiden said, I wish that you at home would stay,
And here some other woman woo. Methinks discreeter it would be
For you to stay where nobody will you require to risk your life.
You can, in this vicinity, find just as nobly born a wife.

In heart they premonitions felt of troubles that before them lay;
And all of them were fain to weep, whatever any one might say.
The gold they on their bosoms wore was much discolored by the tears
That copiously flowed from eyes made dim from agonizing fears.

Lord Siegfried, further she remarked, most earnestly I
recommend
To thy good faith and clemency my dearest brother and
thy friend,
That he no danger may incur when you arrive in Brunhild's
land.
The hardy warrior promised this upon the fair Kriem-
hilda's hand.

The noble swordsman then replied: So long as I my life
retain,
So long may you from every care, my gracious lady, free
remain.
In safety I will bring him back to you again upon the
Rhine;
I promise that upon my life. For this him thanked the
maid divine.

Away their golden shields were borne, and taken to the
river shore;
And instantly within the ship their full equipment did
they store.
Their horses also had they brought, and ready were away
to sail.
The charming women then began, with much ado, to weep
and wail.

And many a love-inspiring lass the palace windows stood
behind.
The vessel, with her canvas set, was started by a friendly
wind.
The proud associates in arms were wafted off upon the
Rhine;
And thereupon King Gunther said: To whom shall we
the helm resign?

I, said Siegfried, that will take; I well upon the waves
can you
Unto our destination guide, be well assured of that, brave
crew.
The proper currents of the sea to me are with precision
known.
So they, in happiness of heart, from Burgundy were
swiftly blown.

A boat-hook Siegfried found on board, and taking it him-
self in hand,
He stuck it firmly in the bank, and pushed the boat away
from land.
Then Gunther, not to be outdone, laid hands himself upon
an oar.
And thus these meritorious knights took their departure
from the shore.

Supplied were they with dainty food, as also various kinds
of wine,
The finest that could be obtained from anywhere about
the Rhine.
Their horses on the quiet sea in unmolested stillness
stood;
So evenly the vessel sailed no troubles taxed their forti-
tude.

The lusty ropes that held their sails the breezes held ex-
tended tight;
And thus full twenty leagues they made ere overtaken by
the night;
By favoring currents they were borne quickly down toward
the sea;
Thereby however, afterward, in evil times they came to
be.

After eleven days had passed, at early morn, I've heard
it said,
They found the wind had favored them, and carried them
so far ahead
That they the castle now drew near of Isenstein, in Brun-
hild's land,
Concerning which were ignorant all but him with helm in
hand.

When Gunther standing on the deck so many citadels
discerned,
And marshland, too, of such extent, he quickly to the pilot
turned:
Friend Siegfried, let me be informed, provided it to you
is known,
Who doth these noble fortresses and this majestic country
own.

In all my life's eventful course, undoubtedly must I con-
fess,
So many well-constructed forts had never to my eyes
access,
In any country on this earth, as here before us we may
scan.
Whoever could such works contrive was certainly a mighty
man.

Thus Siegfried rendered his reply: All this I have at my
command.
To Brunhild everything belongs, the castles all as well
as land,
And eke the fort of Isenstein, as I beyond all question
know.
This very day you there may see fair women in a goodly
show.

You heroes I will caution well to be in all things one in
mind;
To stand together in your words, the better way methinks
you'll find.
And then again, if we to-day before Brunhilda should
appear,
We must before the royal maid do everything with watch-
ful care.

When we surrounded by her suite shall see the charming
queen as well,
Enlightened heroes, we must all the selfsame story surely
tell.
Let Gunther my commander be, and I his subject to com-
mand;
And then shall his desire proceed as doth his longing heart
demand.

Great readiness they all evinced to follow fully his ad-
vice,
And through an overweening pride did none prefer his
own device.
They said exactly what he wished, and everything went
with them well,
When Gunther, shortly afterward, to see Brunhilda it
befell.

I pleasure take in doing this, not out of love so much for
thee,
As for thy charming sister's sake, that worthy maiden fair
to see.
As my own soul she is to me more highly valued than my
life;
I hope to thoroughly deserve that she consent to be my
wife.

SEVENTH ADVENTURE

HOW GUNTHER WON BRUNHILDA

BY this time had the little ship conducted o'er the water
 been
So nearly to the castle walls that, as the king surveyed
 the scene,
He saw at windows high above the face of many a lovely
 maid.
That he about them nothing knew made him truly feel
 quite sad.

He earnestly of Siegfried asked: If you for me have any
 love,
Pray tell me whether you do know those youthful maidens
 up above,
Who yonder are now looking down at us below upon the
 sea?
Whoever may their master be, they bear themselves with
 majesty.

To him did Siegfried thus reply: You should contrive to
 get a glance
At all the damsels standing there, and then inform me in
 advance
Which you among them all would take, if you should the
 selection have.
That will I do, King Gunther said, the warrior alert and
 brave.

Distinctly I can one perceive, standing at that window
there,
Clad in a dress of snowy white, well suited to a frame so
fair.
My eyes would her at once select, so beautiful of form is
she.
If I should dare so much to ask, she is the one my wife
would be.

Thine eye hath chosen happily, its glance is accurate and
keen;
For that the noble Brunhild is, the beautiful young maiden
queen
After whom thy heart aspires, thy spirit also, and thy
soul.
Her carriage satisfied the king, as over her a glance he
stole.

The regal virgin ordered now from every window to de-
part
All the maidens standing there; not any longer should
they dart
Their glances at the foreigners. Without a murmur they
obeyed.
What afterward these women did has also known to us
been made.

They donned their richest finery, these unknown, foreign
lords to meet;
As pretty women always do, to gratify their self-con-
ceit.
Up to the narrow window now they stepped with curi-
osity,
Where they the heroes could observe with privacy and
modesty.

The company contained but four that planted foot upon
that land,
Where Siegfried led a splendid horse up and down along
the strand;
And at the window this was seen by all the lovely women
there.
Excessive was the reverence that Gunther thus appeared to
share.

As servant of his Majesty he by the bridle held the
steed.
A splendid animal it was, tall and strong, of noble
breed,
Which he held fast until the king securely in the saddle
sat.
Thus Siegfried him assistance gave, which soon entirely he
forgot.

He afterward his own good horse out of the vessel also
brought.
Such menial services as these had seldom fallen to his
lot;
The stirrup for another knight he never once had held
before.
It happened now that all of this the women at the window
saw.

In every way appeared alike these heroes bold and undis-
mayed;
In both their horses and attire was only snowy white dis-
played;
They hardly could be told apart; and beautiful the buckler
bands,
Shimmering so resplendently within the noble warriors'
hands.

Their saddles much bejewelled were, their poitrels singularly small;
And thus with dignity they rode before Brunhilda's stately hall;
About them were suspended bells constructed out of burnished gold.
Within the land they had arrived, as well became such heroes bold,

With lances furbished up afresh, and each a finely tempered sword
Extending downward to the spur, acute of edge and very broad.
These heroes, riding thus bedight, upon the river shore were seen
Below the window where reclined the beautiful young maiden queen.

Attending them did Dankwart go, his brother Hagen with him, too,
And both these hardy swordsmen wore, if what the people say is true,
Magnificently wrought attire, as black in hue as raven's wing;
And bucklers new, of ample size, did they also with them bring.

The rarest gems from India in great profusion did they wear,
That off from their apparel sent an evanescent shimmering glare.
Their little vessel they forsook, without a guard, upon the flood,
And rode away toward the fort, those heroes valorous and good.

Full six and eighty lofty towers were now laid open to
their eyes,
Three palaces immense and grand, beside a hall of stately
size
With walls of finest marble made, in color like the vernal
grass.
Herein did this majestic queen her time with her attend-
ants pass.

The castle gates were now unlocked, and speedily thrown
open wide;
And Brunhild's men with promptitude proceeded to the
outer side,
Where they with courtesy received the guests into their
lady's land.
The horses then, as well as shields, were taken from them
out of hand.

The chamberlain then said to them: Deliver unto us your
swords,
And coruscating coats of mail. Allow such things will not
my lords,
With heat Von Tronya Hagen said; we on ourselves will
these convey.
Then Siegfried thus to him began of court formalities to
say:

The custom in this castle is, as I to you will now ex-
plain,
That deadly weapon of no kind can any visitor re-
tain.
Yours then allow them to remove, as you will find entirely
right.
Unwillingly this Hagen did, King Gunther's pertinacious
knight.

To them were given wine to drink, and good apartments
for repose;
On all sides agile warriors the court in numbers did dis-
close
About them hurrying everywhere, in princely garments
all attired.
And many a scrutinizing glance these foreigners from
them inspired.

About this time to Brunhild were officially the tidings
brought,
That her some unknown warriors at present in the castle
sought,
Who, in the dress of noblemen, across the sea had been
conveyed.
She then began to question make, this beautiful, attractive
maid:

Do not neglect to let me know, remarked the haughty
maiden queen,
Who may the unknown warriors be that I so recently have
seen
Standing in my castle yard thus proudly in their suits of
mail,
And why these heroes have essayed hither to my court
to sail.

Then one of her attendants said: Most noble lady, it is
true
That not a single one of them before has been within my
view,
Yet one of those who stands below the attitude of Siegfried
hath.
A good reception give to him sincerely I advise in
faith.

The second of those comrades there quite laudable appears
to me;
If only he the power possessed, a king he's fitted well
to be
Of rich domains of vast extent, a duty he could well fulfil.
Among the others he doth stand with lordly air erect and
still.

The third of them resembles one who churlish doth himself
demean,
Yet, not the less of goodly form, O mighty and benignant
queen.
His glances penetrating are as he them ever round him
throws;
His mood is one, as I believe, that anger and resentment
shows.

The last I have to tell you of, most lovable appears to
be.
That highly gifted swordsman looks attractive in a high
degree,
As there with maiden modesty and noble attitude he
stands.
If anything should him annoy it might repent us in these
lands.

For gentle as he may appear, and comely as may be his
frame,
He yet may bring distressing tears to many a meritorious
dame,
If once his temper be aroused. His aspect is so fine and
good
The virtues all, of every kind, must in that hero find
abode.

To this the royal maiden said: My raiment let me have
at hand;
For if the hardy Siegfried dare his foot to set within my
land,
In order to obtain my love, the cost thereof shall be his
life.
I do not him so greatly fear that I perforce must be his
wife.

The beautiful Brunhilda soon was clad in her selected
gown,
And waiting on her Majesty was many a lovely maiden
seen.
A hundred more or less there were arrayed in gorgeous
finery,
And many a matron of repute attended her the guests
to see.

In their assemblage also went some fighting men of Isen-
land,
All warriors of Brunhilda's court, and every one with
sword in hand;
Five hundred possibly or more, which much the visitors
annoyed.
Up from their seats at once arose those heroes all of fear
devoid.

As soon as did Brunhilda's eyes upon the hardy Siegfried
rest,
With regal dignity and grace she him with courtesy ad-
dressed:
I, Siegfried, you sincerely give a hearty welcome to my
land;
The object of your pilgrimage I now would gladly under-
stand.

My cordial thanks, Brunhilda fair, must I perforce to
you evince
For deigning me so well to greet, majestic daughter of
a prince,
Before this noble warrior, who hath in front of me his
place.
Since he my gracious master is the honor can I not em-
brace.

A king he is upon the Rhine; what need of further being
said?
From nothing but regard for thee have we the voyage
hither made.
He fain would show to thee his love, no matter what may
him betide.
Upon this question think betimes; my lord will ever thus
abide.

By name of Gunther is he known, a powerful and lofty
sire.
If thou his love can but return he nothing more will e'er
desire.
On thy account have I with him the journey to thy coun-
try made;
If he had not my master been, no part therein should I
have had.

If he thy master be, she said, and thee but as a vassal
claims,
Will he, in manner I dictate, withstand me in my usual
games?
If he therein the victor be then I will surely be his
wife;
But if I win shall each of you relinquish unto me his
life.

At this Von Tronya Hagen said: Pray let us see, most noble queen,
In what amusements you engage. If Gunther so himself demean
As you to let his conqueror be, on evil lines must they be laid.
He yet may well rejoice to wed so beautiful and kind a maid.

The stone must he know how to hurl and thereupon jump after it;
And also throw with me the spear. Be not so ready with your wit,
For here you easily may lose as well your honor as your life.
Thereover you had better think, the maiden said, with mildness rife.

The agile Siegfried then advanced with promptitude toward the king,
And him advised the whole affair before the queen to freely bring,
And let her see his full desire, that easy he might still remain;
For I, said he, will you protect, and by my arts the victory gain.

King Gunther then responded thus: Most noble and majestic queen,
Determine what from me you wish, and more than what thereby is seen,
For thy attractive beauty's sake, will I with pleasure undertake.
My head I willingly will lose if me thy lord thou dost not make.

When his devoted, ardent words this youthful sovereign
had heard,
Commanded she, as seemly was, the sport to be at once
prepared.
She ordered for the coming strife her full apparel to be
sought;
A golden suit of mail complete, and useful shield, to her
were brought.

Herself in silken overdress still further did the maid be-
dight,
Through which no weapon ever yet had managed her to
reach in fight;
Made of the most effective stuff to be obtained in Libya's
land,
With laces delicately worked entirely round its shining
band.

Meanwhile her supercilious pride a menace to her guests
had been.
Sir Hagen and the bold Dankwart affronted standing there
were seen.
How with their master it might go, their minds did greatly
agitate;
Their expedition, as they thought, was not propitious to
their fate.

Meantime proceeded Siegfried out, the crafty and deceit-
ful man,
Ere any one had it remarked, and quickly to the vessel
ran,
In which he his tarnkappe found where he it safely had
concealed.
He stealthily escaped within before his absence was re-
vealed.

Without delay he hastened back and many warriors found
about.

Her Majesty directions gave the noble games to carry
out.

Again among them in he stole, and managed by his sor-
cery

That out of all assembled there not one was able him
to see.

The ring was carefully marked off, wherein the struggle
should be made,

Before the gallant warriors who were to watch the skill
displayed.

With weapons carried in their hands were fully seven
hundred seen;

That who it was the contest won they might declare with
conscience clean.

Queen Brunhild had already come, and she completely
armed was found,

As if in combat she would fight for any other monarch's
ground.

Upon her silken robe she wore full many a plate of bur-
nished gold,

Which her complexion's lovely tint with charming clear-
ness did unfold.

Behind her came her retinue, with her conveying to the
field,

For service in the coming sport, a finely fashioned golden
shield,

Bestudded well with hardened steel, immensely thick and
very wide,

Beneath the solid face of which would she the issue firm
abide.

Around the margin of this shield a splendid border had
been made,
On which a multitude of gems as green as grass had been
inlaid,
Whose countless bright and glittering disks mingled well
among the gold.
The man who would this maiden win must certainly be
very bold.

Beneath the studs this mighty shield, so has the tale to us
been told,
Was twenty-seven inches thick; and this the maid with
ease could hold.
So much of steel as well as gold this mighty buckler did
embrace,
That four powerful chamberlains could hardly lift it from
its place.

As soon as sturdy Hagen saw the big, unwieldy shield
brought out,
His anger fiercely was aroused, and he began in wrath
to shout:
What now, King Gunther, do you say? This means the
loss of every life.
The woman you aspire to wed will surely make a devilish
wife.

Now further hear of her attire, of which she had a match-
less store:
Composed of silk from Azagaug a suit of mail complete
she wore,
That costly and majestic was; from which in clearest
lustre shone,
Upon this royal daughter fair, full many a grand and
radiant stone.

Then, irresistible and broad, was borne to this athletic
girl
A keenly sharpened javelin, that she accustomed was to
hurl;
Unyielding in its density, moreover big, with heavy
butt,
With edge upon its either side, this weapon horribly would
cut.

Of this colossal lance's weight hear now the wonders that
are told:
A hundred pounds of solid iron were beaten out for it
to hold.
To carry it was difficult by three of Brunhild's strongest
men.
To wring his hands with anxious care began the noble
Gunther then.

With agitated mind he thought: What now will here be
taking place?
If came the devil out of hell, how could he stand before
her face?
If I were only, with my life, back safe again in Bur-
gundy,
She might a very long time here, without my love, dwell
wholly free.

In truth, we well may feel assured, he stood before them
in dismay;
They carried to the meeting-place his suit of armor for
the fray.
The mighty monarch of the Rhine was speedily therein
arrayed:
Distracted in his mind with grief was Hagen very nearly
made.

His brother Dankwart now drew near, and earnestly unto
him said:

I bitterly repent in soul that we to court this journey
made.

We once were hailed as warriors, and must we now, within
this place,

Our honor and our lives give up, by woman brought to
this disgrace?

I cannot help my bitter grief that ever we approached
this land.

If but my brother Hagen had his sword retained within
his hand,

And I were also holding mine, a little softer should they
go

In their accursed insolence, these men of Brunhild's ret-
inue.

More modestly should they proceed, to that I plight my
solemn troth.

Had I to peace a thousand times been sworn by every
sacred oath,

Ere I, before my eyes, would see my own dear master
fouly slain,

Her life this beautiful young maid without a question
should resign.

Unhindered could we easily this land and all its people
leave.

His brother Hagen him replied: If we the garments
should receive

That for the strife are requisite, and had our weapons
at our side,

Then would our lady's arrogance, without a doubt, be
mollified.

Now everything that he had said the youthful queen had
clearly heard;
A furtive glance at him she cast, and with a smile she then
averred:
Since he believes himself so bold, their harness unto them
restore,
And let the hardy warriors sigh for swords within their
hands no more.

As little doth it trouble me whether they well armed be
seen,
As if in nakedness they stood: so spake this royal child
and queen.
I fear the strength of nobody whom I by chance have
ever known;
I also think that with this king in strife I well can hold
my own.

When weapons unto them were brought in deference to
what she said,
Was Dankwart so much overcome that he from joy be-
came quite red.
Now play whatever game you will, aloud that worthy sol-
dier called,
Unvanquished now our Gunther is, since we our swords
again can hold.

The greatness of Brunhilda's strength was then beyond
all question shown,
When her attendants brought to her, within the ring, a
heavy stone,
Unwieldy and of monstrous size, extremely smooth and
almost round;
A dozen of her warriors could scarcely lift it from the
ground.

She sent this whirling everywhere, after she the spear
had flung.
Thereat the men of Burgundy in nerve were thoroughly
unstrung.
Then shouted Hagen very loud: Who is it then our king
would wed?
I wish that she in hell were cast, therein to be the devil's
bride.

Back from her alabaster arms she turned the sleeves which
them concealed;
And soon as she was thus prepared, upon her arm she
placed her shield;
She brandished then the spear aloft, at which display the
strife began.
Brunhilda's wild and furious air did both the heroes near
unman.

And were it not that Siegfried came to bring to Gunther
quick relief,
The valiant king, without a doubt, had soon to her re-
signed his life.
Invisibly he stepped to him, and gently touched him on
the hand;
And Gunther, at this stratagem, in apprehension great
did stand.

Who can it be that hath me touched? thought the bold
and dauntless man;
For when he looked on every side not any soul was there
to scan.
The hero whispered in his ear: It Siegfried is, the king's
compeer;
Comport yourself before the queen as if you felt not any
fear.

Surrender from your hand the shield, that I may bear it
in the fray;

And diligent attention give to everything you hear me
say.

You must yourself the gestures make, performance must
you leave to me.

When Gunther Siegfried recognized it gave him joy in
high degree.

My artifice with care conceal, for both of us will that be
best;

In such event, this fighting queen so thoroughly cannot
molest

You with her haughty insolence, as certainly is her in-
tent.

See now with what effrontery against you she her scorn
doth vent.

This beautiful young amazon, with all the forces she
could wield,

Projected forth her ugly spear upon the new and mighty
shield,

That on his left arm was sustained by Siegelinda's valiant
child;

The fire sprang from off the steel, as driven by a tempest
wild.

The point of this huge javelin entirely through the shield
did go

With so much energy that fire sprang also from the mail
below.

The shock thereof was so severe that both the mighty
warriors fell.

The mystic cloak alone it was that saved the sounding of
their knell.

The blood from hardy Siegfried's mouth proceeded like
a running brook ;
He soon again was on his feet, and then the bold young
warrior took
The javelin that through his shield she had propelled its
utmost length,
And, in an instant, threw it back with almost superhuman
strength.

He could not find it in his heart so beautiful a maid to
slay ;
And so the lance's cutting edge from her direction turned
away.
The massive haft he foremost hurled with all the energy
he found.
Upon her suit of mail it struck, and loud thereon it did
resound.

From off her armor sprang the fire, as if the wind had
urged it on ;
The dart had well directed been by Siegelinda's stalwart
son :
The blow so forcible arrived that she beneath it could not
stand.
King Gunther never could, in truth, have done it with
unaided hand.

And Brunhild, too, the lovely queen, herself to rally was
not slow ;
King Gunther, noble knight, she said, accept my thanks
for that fine blow.
She thought, unaided and alone, that he himself the deed
had done.
But no, by stronger man than he had she upon the earth
been thrown.

Then swiftly she advanced again, with rage and fury
overwrought,
The heavy stone above her head quite easily the maiden
brought,
And with terrific energy a long extended distance
flung;
Then after leaped so heftily that loudly there her armor
rung.

The stone descended to the earth full four and twenty
yards away,
Yet in her spring she overpassed the spot of earth whereon
it lay.
The active Siegfried now arrived at where the stone its
place had found,
Which thereupon the hero threw, but Gunther raised it
from the ground.

Enormous strength did Siegfried have, was also tall and
very bold;
He threw it farther off than she, and far beyond his spring
did hold.
But now the greatest wonder comes: that in his leap, his
magic art,
To carry Gunther in his arms, did strength enough to
him impart.

Accomplished was the wondrous jump; upon the earth
reposed the stone;
The king, so far as could be seen, had done it all, and
he alone.
Brunhilda, the majestic queen, with passion and chagrin
was red;
Except for Siegfried's timely help would Gunther now
be lying dead.

When she the valiant hero saw within the ring all safe
and sound,
The queen, with sadness overwhelmed, said to her men
upon the ground:
Come hither, friends and followers, without delay to where
I stand;
As Gunther's subjects now become must you and all within
the land.

These resolute and hardy men their arms in sadness all
laid down;
And many a grim old warrior, who had in battle won
renown,
Was found prostrated at the feet of Gunther, King of
Burgundy.
They thought that he the games had won alone by his
own energy.

He greeted her with tenderness, for courtly was he in
his mind,
Then taking his right hand in hers, the lovely queen in
manner kind
To him surrendered every power that she possessed in all
the land.
And Hagen, dextrous man, rejoiced that matters so had
come to hand.

The noble knight invited she back with her at once to
go,
To visit her extensive hall, where many men themselves
did show,
Who through a salutary fear so much the better service
gave;
For Siegfried, the invincible, had managed them from
harm to save.

Siegfried's great activity was equalled by his wariness;
So his tarnkappe speedily he carried to its hiding-place.
Then back he hastened to the hall, where many a woman had her seat;
And there to Gunther loud he said, in words intended them to cheat:

For what, lord king, do you delay? Why do you not the sports begin,
That you her gracious Majesty hath promised she will deftly win?
Pray give us opportunity to see what each therefrom may glean.
And this the crafty hero said to make believe he naught had seen.

The Queen Brunhilda then remarked: However hath it come to pass
That you have not already seen the issue of the games, alas,
Wherein King Gunther's powerful hand the victory hath grandly won?
An answer to her Hagen gave, great Burgundy's illustrious son.

While you, my noble queen, he said, were so afflicting us in heart,
And when the master of the Rhine at last the victor did depart,
Was Siegfried, our good warrior, within the vessel at the shore;
On that account he doth not know how each the brunt of battle bore.

Right glad am I to hear this news! the hero said when this
he heard;
Our journey, I am glad to learn, so good an issue hath
incurred;
That on the earth exists one soul to whom the mastery
you resign.
You now will have, my noble maid, to follow us toward
the Rhine.

Not yet will that event take place, replied with emphasis
the queen;
I first must ask my relatives, and those who at my court
convene.
It would not do at all for me so readily to quit my
land;
My nearest kinsmen, be thou sure, shall first the matter
understand.

Then ordered she her messengers in all directions out to
go,
Deputing them to all her friends, and those who fealty did
owe,
To bid them come without delay to visit her at Isen-
stein;
She also had on each bestowed attire that might a prince
enshrine.

Thereafter, each successive day, from early morn till late
at night,
To Brunhild's castle travelling did troops of warriors come
in sight.
What now, said Hagen, is to pay? What this implies,
I'd like to know.
Some injury from Brunhild's men we may expect before
we go.

When they with all their forces here within the country
have been thrown,
The queen's intention is to us a secret totally un-
known.
And what if she disdain us then? Assuredly should we
be lost;
That noble maiden was, indeed, born to our disastrous
cost.

The mighty Siegfried then observed: To hinder that will
I contrive;
What now doth so excite your fears I will not suffer to
arrive;
Assistance I to you will bring, as unto you shall soon be
shown,
In choice selected men-at-arms, who now to you are quite
unknown.

A journey I from here will take, and after me you must
not ask;
May God your honor safely guard till I have carried out
my task.
Soon back again shall I arrive, and with me bring a thou-
sand men,
The very best of warriors that ever came within your
ken.

Do not too long remain away, remarked the king, sedate
and sad;
We shall of all the help you bring, with reason good, be
very glad.
In twenty days, he then replied, here back again shall I be
seen.
That you have ordered me away, you must assert before
the queen.

EIGHTH ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGFRIED JOURNEYED TO THE NIBELUNGS

THENCE Siegfried went without delay toward the
 haven in the sound,
In his tarnkappe well concealed, where he his little vessel
 found.
Within the boat he slyly stole, invisible to every
 eye;
And quickly sped away from there, as if he on the wind
 did fly.

Unseen by all the boatman was, yet swift its way the cutter
 held,
From Siegfried's superhuman strength, by which alone it
 was impelled.
The people thought it was the wind in active force that
 sent it on;
But no, it was by Siegfried urged, the lovely Siegelinda's
 son.

At flight of but a single day, toward the middle of the
 night,
To land so far away he came, by means of his prodigious
 might,
As commonly a hundred days, or even more, would have
 consumed;
The Nibelungenland it was, where he his treasure had
 inhumed.

Alone the hero set his foot upon an island broad and
long;
His coracle securely tied that warrior robust and
strong.
He then toward a mountain went that had a castle on its
ground,
And there asylum he besought, as weary ones to do were
found.

Then came he up before the gate, which he discovered
firmly closed;
For men defended honor then as even now they are dis-
posed.
Upon the door began to knock the stranger who had thus
arrived;
But guarded well was this retreat. As sentinel, within
there lived

A giant of enormous size, who kept his watch with care-
fulness;
And by whose side at every hour his weapons stood in
readiness.
Who is it there outside, he said, that knocks so loud upon
the door?
In simulated voice, thereon, this answer to him Siegfried
bore:

A knight I am I'd have you know, so open up your portal
wide,
Or else methinks that not a few will I bring forcibly out-
side
Who would prefer to be at rest, and on their beds in peace
to lie.
The porter's anger was aroused when he received this
gruff reply.

The bold colossus, full of wrath, was instantly completely
armed;
With helm already on his head; and, ere the sleepers were
alarmed,
He had his shield in readiness. He then the gate wide open
threw,
And, ignorant of who stood there, he furiously at Siegfried
flew.

How darest thou arouse from sleep so many brave and
hardy men?
Then rapidly his sturdy hand delivered blows with force
of ten.
The noble stranger saved himself from many a death-
intending stroke.
The porter struck so lustily that he his shield in pieces
broke

With a bar of solid iron, which put the swordsman in
distress.
He even death began to fear, so mighty and so piti-
less
Became the heavy blows which fell from this custodian of
the door.
Yet for his resolute defence his master loved him all the
more.

So doggedly they struggled there the castle echoed with
the sound;
The rumble even could be heard as far as Niblung's palace
ground.
At last the porter was subdued, and bound by his resistless
hand;
The news thereof was spread abroad throughout the Nibe-
lungenland.

The din of this terrific strife across the mountain had been
heard
By Alberich, a savage dwarf, a hardy man who nothing
feared.
He soon was in his armor clad, and hurried off to where
he found
The bold adventurous unknown just as the giant he had
bound.

Now Alberich was very brave, and had abundant strength
in store ;
A helmet and a coat of mail he on his stunted body
wore ;
Meanwhile a heavy golden whip he carried in his crooked
hand,
And ran like rushing wind to where he found the hardy
Siegfried stand.

Seven heavy metal knobs suspended on the scourge there
were,
And he with these, upon his left, the shield that hardy
Siegfried bare
With so much force and vigor smote that very near he
shivered it.
Again the view of speedy death before the hero's eyes
did flit.

His buckler, totally destroyed, out of his hands he threw
away,
And hastily within its sheath his trusty sword did he
convey,
As he his sturdy chamberlain had not the least desire to
kill.
His people's lives he tried to save, his faithful duty to
fulfil.

With nothing in his powerful hands, on Alberic he swiftly
ran,
And resolutely grasped the beard of that archaic, hoary
man,
Whom he so violently shook that loud he bellowed with
the pain.
The youthful hero's punishment did every nerve in Albric
strain.

Now lustily the dwarf cried out: Take not away from me
my life.
If to another I myself had not already made the
fief,
And faithfully unto him sworn his servant evermore to
be,
Sincerely would I you obey till I my final hour should
see.

Then Alberic he also bound, as he the giant had be-
fore;
And he from Siegfried's mighty strength had sore afflic-
tion to endure.
The dwarf began to question him: What is the name that
thou dost own?
And he replied: I Siegfried am; I thought I should by
thee be known.

That news is grateful to my ears, said Alberic in glad
surprise;
By your heroic, furious deeds, I now can fully recog-
nize
That you do verily deserve the lord of all this land to
be.
What you may order I will do, if only you will set me
free.

Then Siegfried hastily remarked: Make off as if upon the
wind,
And bring me of my warriors the boldest fencers thou canst
find,
A thousand of the Nibelungs I here desire at once to
see.
No wish have I to take thy life, thou nothing hast to fear
from me.

From Alberic and Hercules he cut the ribbons which them
bound;
And like a dart the pigmy flew to where the warriors he
found.
He anxiously awakened them, who in King Niblung's
service were,
And said: Arise, ye heroes all, and off at once to Siegfried
fare.

They quickly from their couches sprang, and soon in prep-
aration he
A thousand nimble warriors in armor could before him
see.
To Siegfried instantly he led the gallant and intrepid
band;
He gracious salutation gave, and greeted many with his
hand.

They lighted tapers not a few, and claret offered him to
drink.
For coming in such willing haste, he heartily them all did
thank,
And said he every one desired with him across the sea
to go;
For which he found, among them all, not one unwillingness
to show.

Full thirty thousand warriors had come his summons to
obey;
A thousand of the best of whom selected he with him to
stay.
Their helmets and full harnesses were in a moment brought
to hand,
As requisite for them to take within the fair Brunhilda's
land.

Ye noble knights, to them he said, a word of warning in
your ear:
Apparel of the richest kind to that far court you all must
wear,
For we shall have to go before many a fine and lovely
dame.
Such garments with you therefore take as fittingly adorn
the frame.

Some fool may possibly incline to give the lie to this and
say:
How could so many warriors themselves together thus dis-
play?
Where could they provisions find, or where obtain so much
attire?
Though thirty countries he controlled he never could
enough acquire.

But I have you distinctly told that Siegfried was im-
mensely rich.
The Nibelungen hoard was his, the kingdom, too; from all
of which
It came about that he could give, with lavish hand, to
every knight,
Without reducing his supply, take from the treasure what
he might.

Quite early on the following morn their noted journey was begun,
So enterprising were the men whom Siegfried to his cause had won.
Fine horses with them they conveyed, and good apparel had at hand;
In proud array they started off, and soon drew near Brunhilda's land.

Behind the many windows stood maids and women fair to see.
Then asked her Majesty the queen: Knows any one who they may be,
That flying there before the wind upon the sea their presence show?
Magnificent the sails they spread, of purer white they are than snow.

Then said the monarch of the Rhine: These men are some who me obey,
And, when I made the journey here, remained behind, not far away;
I lately sent for them to come, and now, my lady, they are here.
This multitude of stately guests was welcomed with the best of cheer.

Then Siegfried plainly was perceived standing in the vessel's prow,
Attired in height of princely style, with other fighting men enow.
The queen now pleasantly remarked: Will you, lord king, me deign to tell,
If I these guests shall welcome here, or such intent within me quell?

I wish, said he, that you would go before your palace them
to meet,
And thus make evident to them that you desire them well
to greet.
The royal maid herself demeaned precisely as the king
advised;
And, having singled Siegfried out, with special greeting
him surprised.

Good lodging was for them procured; their arms removed
with careful hand.
By this time had so many guests made their appearance
in the land
That everywhere about the place in crowds they every mo-
ment thronged.
Their homeward journey to begin much the brave Bur-
gundians longed.

Just now the maiden queen remarked: I ever in esteem
should hold
The man who could, with even hand, dispense my silver
and my gold,
In which I lavishly abound, among these guests who us
invade.
Then Geiselher's heroic man, Sir Dankwart, her this an-
swer made:

Most gracious and exalted queen, to hold its key give me
the right,
And I will so distribute it, said the bold and gallant
knight,
That, if I any shame shall earn, it I alone may have to
bear.
That he beneficent would be to all was made entirely
clear.

When Hagen's brother to himself appropriated had the
key,
The richest gifts unlimited he gave to all whom he could
see.
Should any one a mark desire, to him so many did he
give
That all the poor within the land in joy could ever after
live.

Pounds sterling by the hundred he, without account, dis-
tributed;
And many, in superb attire, from that great hall with
pleasure sped,
Who never in their lives before had such luxurious gar-
ments worn.
At last the queen about it heard, and was at once with
anguish torn.

She spoke about it to the king: I very much should like
to know
Why nothing now is left to me of all the raiment I could
show,
By your unthrifty chamberlain, who also dissipates my
gold.
Whoever will his zeal abridge shall I forever worthy
hold.

Such costly gifts he throws away, the knight must cer-
tainly believe
That I have here invited death; but somewhat longer shall
I live,
And competent myself I am my patrimony to ex-
haust.
No queen, indeed, had ever had a chamberlain at such a
cost.

At this Von Tronya Hagen said: My lady, be it known to
you
That my good master from the Rhine, of gold and fine
apparel, too,
Hath such a store to give away that he hath not the
slightest need
To have away from here removed the smallest part of
Brunhild's meed.

Nay, nay, the queen to him replied, if you for me have
any love,
Let me a score of travelling chests when we depart from
here remove,
Filled up with gold and silken stuffs, that empty may not
be my hand,
With naught to give when we arrive at home in our Bur-
gundian land.

The chests were laden to their lids with every kind of
precious stone.
And some of her own people must be present when the
work was done;
For she would not the task entrust to Geiselher's unthrifty
man.
Gunther and Hagen both thereat in merriment to laugh
began.

Again the royal maiden asked: To whom shall I entrust
my lands,
That must, ere we departure take, be settled under both
our hands?
To this the noble king replied: Call hither to your swift
relief
Whomsoever you may choose, that he may be appointed
chief.

Of her most confidential friends the damsel one beside her
saw,
Her uncle on her mother's side, to whom she then began
to say:
Let me surrender unto you my various castles and my
land,
Until his chosen officers King Gunther here may please to
send.

Among her faithful followers she chose two thousand war-
riors fine,
To sail across the sea with her when starting off toward
the Rhine,
Together with the thousand knights from out the Nibel-
ungenland.
When they were properly equipped, they rode away toward
the strand.

She also carried with her hence six and eighty noble
dames;
As well as full a hundred maids, all candidates for beauty's
claims.
No longer did they stay behind, but soon were on the
waters deep.
Of those who then at home were left how many now began
to weep!

With graceful marks of courtesy the maiden left her
native land,
And kisses to her next of kin, who near her to the last
did stand.
With kind, affectionate farewells, within the ship they left
the shore.
Her father's dear ancestral land beheld that maiden never-
more.

Upon the voyage oft were heard enchanting strains of
melody ;

And almost every kind of sport enjoyed they all upon
the sea.

A favoring wind they also had to waft them to their jour-
ney's end.

When they began to leave the land from many an eye
did tears descend.

No sign of love toward the king would she upon the pas-
sage give ;

Diversion such as this must wait till they at home together
live

Within the citadel at Worms, when they a hightide would
enjoy ;

To which themselves, with their esquires, they soon could
happily convoy.

NINTH ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGFRIED WAS SENT TO WORMS

WHEN they about nine days had thus been following
their ocean way,
Von Tronya Hagen thus remarked: Now, hearken well to
what I say.
Long ago some word should we have sent to Worms upon
the Rhine;
Already should our messengers in Burgundy at ease re-
cline.

King Gunther answered him in turn: All that you say is
very true;
And, verily, we no one have so ably qualified as
you,
Friend Hagen, this to undertake. In readiness then soon
be found;
Our voyage and vicissitudes can no one better there ex-
pound.

You ought to know, respected lord, that I as envoy am
not good;
Let me continue chamberlain, and keep my place upon the
flood.
The women's wardrobes let me guard with my accustomed
vigilance,
Till them to Burgundy we bring over this ocean's vast
expanse.

Far rather should you Siegfried ask your royal message
to convey ;
This duty he would well perform with ardor and propriety.
If he this favor you refuse, then you, in your most kindly
way,
For your beloved sister's sake can him to make the journey
pray.

At once he for that hero sent, who came as soon as he was
found ;
To him he said: We near the land to which we all of
us are bound ;
To my dear sister it behooves me now a messenger to
send ;
My mother also should be told that we upon the Rhine
descend.

I therefore you, Lord Siegfried, ask this enterprise to
undertake ;
For which I ever shall you thank ; thus the royal sword-
man spake.
But Siegfried this declined to do, the sensitive, intrepid
man,
Till him the grave, illustrious king to fervently implore
began.

I warmly beg of you, he said, to humor me in my de-
sire,
For my beloved sister's sake, whom you so ardently ad-
mire.
The charming maiden will with me her gratitude unite
to show.
When this arrived at Siegfried's ears he speedily resolved
to go.

Demand you may whate'er you will, and I will gladly undertake
To satisfy your utmost wish, for that enchanting maiden's sake.
To her whom in my heart I bear how can I anything refuse?
On her account will I perform whatever you to ask may choose.

Then go and to my mother say, Dame Uta, the illustrious queen,
That I upon the voyage home have ever in good spirits been.
That we our object have attained let both my brothers surely know;
And also to our other friends the facts about the journey show.

As soon as you my sister see, be sure you all to her reveal;
With Brunhild at my side I hope ever her to serve with zeal.
To my retainers make it known, and all acknowledging my sway,
That what I most at heart desired I have obtained in every way.

I wish you also to direct my dearest nephew, Ortewein,
To have commodious seats arranged along the borders of the Rhine.
And lastly to my men and friends assuredly let it be told,
That with Brunhilda I intend a wedding-festival to hold.

My sister you will please request, when she is made to understand
That I, with my illustrious guests, have set our feet within
my land,
She will with courtesy receive my dear and well-beloved
bride.
Thus shall I ever ready be for service at Kriemhilda's
side.

Of Brunhild then, the noble queen, and her attendants,
every one,
Without ado to take his leave hastened Siegfried, Sig-
mund's son,
As seemly and decorous was. Then off he started for the
Rhine;
And none could ever his affairs to better messenger con-
sign.

With four and twenty warriors his way to Worms he fast
did wing,
And speedily became it known that he had come without
the king.
At this the swordsmen, every one, in eminent distress were
found,
Fearing that their sovereign his death had met on foreign
ground.

They hastened, soon as they arrived, to boldly from their
horses spring;
Then came at once Lord Geiselher, the youthful and in-
trepid king,
And his good brother, Prince Gernot, whose bitterness of
heart was keen,
When they their brother Gunther found was not with Sieg-
fried to be seen.

Lord Siegfried, I you welcome bid, let not your tidings
be delayed;
The king, my brother, why hath he with you not his
appearance made?
Brunhilda's overwhelming strength may him have taken
from our side;
Thus would his ambitious love to us much misery be-
tide.

You may banish all your cares; to you, and all your friends
as well,
By me hath my companion sent his greetings with much
news to tell.
I left him in the best of health; to you he me hath deigned
to send,
That I might, as his messenger, bring news of him into
your land.

Now let me your assistance have in making matters so
agree,
That I may Uta, your great queen, and your beloved
sister see;
For I at once would let them hear the tidings that I have
to tell
Of Gunther and Brunhilda, too, with both of whom doth
all go well.

Then spake the youthful Geiselher: At once to them you
may proceed,
Since you my sister have inspired with ardent love by noble
deed.
For her beloved brother's sake she suffers great anxi-
ety.
The maid will gladly you receive, I can you that well
guarantee.

The noble Siegfried thus replied: If I to her of use
can be,
A faithful and devoted slave will she forever find in
me.
To both the noble ladies, now, who my arrival will de-
clare?
Then Geiselher said gracefully that he himself the word
would bear.

Straightway the youthful Geiselher unto his mother quickly
went,
And to his sister as to her he thus allowed his feelings
vent:
To us hath Siegfried now arrived, the hero of the Nether-
lands;
My brother Gunther hath him sent upon the Rhine with
his commands.

He tidings hither brings to us of how the king's affairs
proceed;
To him permission therefore grant to court without delay
to speed;
Upon the news you may rely that he imports from Isen-
land.
In tribulation and distress the noble women still re-
mained.

For fresh apparel now they sprang, and speedily were
clad therein;
And Siegfried then invited was to court his passage to
begin.
This cheerfully he set about, for he was anxious them to
see.
The noble Kriemhild said to him, with utmost affabil-
ity:

Sir Siegfried, thou most welcome art, thou unexampled warrior;
Where doth my brother Gunther stay, the noble king of signal power?
Afraid was I that Brunhild's strength had him forever from us torn.
Oh, woe to me, unhappy girl, that I should ever have been born!

Then said the bold and gallant knight: Bestow on me the envoy's meed.
You two enchanting women both lament without the slightest need.
I left him healthy and robust, so much to you can now be shown;
To both of you have I been sent to make this information known.

With deep affection's tenderness, my noble and illustrious queen,
He proffers you his services, and joining him his bride is seen.
Now wipe your every tear away, for speedily will they be here.
For many a dilatory day no news had they received so dear.

With kerchief white as driven snow, away from her bewitching eyes
The maiden wiped her falling tears. Then, in accents all might prize,
She thanked the envoy who such news to her so zealously had brought,
Which made her tribulation seem, compared with present joy, as naught.

She bade the messenger sit down, and he thereto was nothing loth.

Then said the lovely, smiling maid: It would a pleasure be, forsooth,

To give you, if I so could dare, as compensation, of my gold;

But you by far too wealthy are; as guerdon you my thanks must hold.

If I should thirty lands, he said, within my sole dominion have,

Yet I a gift from thy fair hand should always gratefully receive.

To this replied the virtuous maid: If that be so, it shall be done.

At once the recompense to fetch, she bade her chamberlain be gone.

Four and twenty golden clasps, richly set with precious stones,

She gave to him as his reward; but, such the soul that him enthrones,

Not one of them would he retain; he had them all apportioned round

Among the fair attendant maids, whom in the room with her he found.

Her mother also proffered him her services with graciousness.

I ought you further to inform, said he, at end of this recess,

Concerning what the king desires on his arrival at the Rhine.

If that, my lady, you will do, in love to you will he incline.

His Majesty sincerely hopes that you his celebrated
guests
Will deign to graciously receive. He also earnestly re-
quests
That you will ride outside of Worms to welcome them upon
the shore.
Your acquiescence in his wish with confidence doth he im-
plore.

All this most gladly shall I do, replied the tender-hearted
maid ;
Wherein I him can pleasure give, his every wish shall be
obeyed.
With sympathetic faithfulness shall his desires all be ful-
filled.
Her color took a deeper hue from joy within her heart
instilled.

Never better in this world was princely messenger re-
ceived.
If she had dared him to embrace, she gladly would, it is
believed.
Far otherwise, though warmly yet, did they adieu at part-
ing say ;
And then those good Burgundians to do his bidding sought
the way.

Sindold and Sir Hunold, too, with Rumold, that intrepid
knight,
No respite to themselves allowed, but labored with unspar-
ing might,
Till seats enough erected were in front of Worms upon
the strand ;
And them the stewards of the king assistance rendering
were found.

And Garie, too, with Ortewein, no longer stayed their
eager hands,
But messengers at once sent off to friends in many other
lands
The nuptial banquet to announce, that soon would therein
be in sway;
For which did many a favored maid herself in gorgeous
clothes array.

All finely decorated were the palace and the outer
wall
For welcoming these visitors. King Gunther's large and
splendid hall
Refurnished was in regal style for many a foreign noble-
man.
And then this famous festival with joyful compliments
began.

All over, riding, could be seen, by every road within the
land,
The intimates of these three kings, who summoned were
on every hand
To give a greeting to the guests who to the festival should
press.
From its abode was taken then many a rich and costly
dress.

Intelligence was soon received that Queen Brunhilda's ret-
inue
Already drawing near was seen. At this the crowds in
number grew
To one vast overwhelming mass of those who lived in Bur-
gundy.
And then what warriors were there on every side for one
to see!

The lovely Kriemhild now remarked: All those of you, my
maidens dear,
Who to the meeting of these knights have any wish with
me to fare,
Seek out the very finest clothes that are secluded in your
chests,
That praise and honor unto us may be awarded by our
guests.

The warriors now began to come, and those attending them
were told
Their finest saddles to bring out, heavy with the purest
gold;
For now the women should proceed out of Worms toward
the Rhine.
Elsewhere it would be hard to find equestrian furnishings
so fine.

How blinding on these ambling nags the lustre of the shin-
ing gold!
From jewels, too, upon their reins, could one the radiance
behold.
Footstools, also, tricked with gold, and made of precious
tapestry,
Were for the women introduced; and they enjoyed the
revelry.

The horses for the womenfolk all ready in the courtyard
stood,
As you were previously told, full of strength and hardi-
hood.
And narrow ribbons on their chests these animals were seen
to wear,
Made of the very finest silk that we have heard of any-
where.

Six and eighty noble dames advanced in order scrupulous,
With hair in ornamented bands. Unto Kriemhilda, at the house,
The beauties salutation gave, with rich attire on them displayed;
And also came, in gems bedecked, many a young and lovely maid.

Of these were four and fifty found, belonging all to Burgundy,
Who beauty had of such a type as very seldom one can see.
With flaxen tresses they appeared, imprisoned by irradiant lace;
Whatever Gunther had desired was done with energy and grace.

Of excellent and costly stuffs, the very best that could be found,
Wore every one before the guests attire for gorgeousness renowned,
Which with their countenances fair most admirably did accord.
Who could disapprobation feel, a sorry humor must have stored.

Ermine robes in goodly count, as well as sable could be found;
And many an arm as well as hand to satisfaction was adorned
With rings and other jewels rare, upon the silk these maidens wore.
The details of this goodly show could no one now in full restore.

Girdles of artistic make, both costly and extremely
long,
Encompassing their shining robes, within the women's
hands were swung
Over their gowns ferrandine, made of stuff from
Araby;
Such as in the whole wide world better could one never
see.

Many a maiden, too, was seen, with jewelled corset tightly
laced,
To bring to a more graceful size her fascinating little
waist.
They would be sorry had their faces their apparel not
outshone.
So beautiful a retinue hath now no woman on a
throne.

When all these fair attendant maids had donned their
beautiful attire,
Which they should wear at this event, there came upon
them, with a stare,
The mettlesome young warriors, trooping in in brilliant
bands,
Bearing bucklers on their arms, and ashen spears within
their hands.

TENTH ADVENTURE

CONCERNING THE MARRIAGE OF GUNTHER AND BRUNHILD

UPON the river's yonder side could now be seen along
the shore
The king and his illustrious guests, as nearer to the strand
they bore.
And many a maiden, too, was seen, with palfrey by the
bridle led.
Now those who had them to receive at once to give them
welcome sped.

As now upon the ships approached the multitude from
Isenland,
Together with the Nibelungs, who constituted Siegfried's
band,
They hurried on toward the shore, with busy hand and
armor's clank,
Where they the kinsmen of the king discovered on the
farther bank.

Now lend your ear, while I the news convey to you about
the queen,
The glorious Uta, noble dame; how with her damsels she
was seen
Conducting a selected group and riding with them to the
strand,
Where to each other were made known full many a maid
and warrior grand.

The Margrave Garie took the rein and led the fair Kriemhilda's horse,
Until before the castle gate; then Siegfried, in her further course,
Would tenderly upon her wait, so beautiful she was and fair:
And this by her, in after days, was recompensed with jealous care.

The chivalrous Sir Ortewein Queen Uta's bridle had in hand;
And so rode many a hardy knight, at some fair woman's soft command.
At court reception such as this, I freely am compelled to own,
So many of the gentle sex themselves together ne'er had shown.

Assaults of arms in serried ranks, by heroes of sublime renown,
Were entered on upon the spot, as could but ill be left undone,
To gratify Kriemhilda's eyes until she at the ships arrived:
Assistance from her saddle then by many a woman was received.

The king already was ashore, with each attending foreign knight;
And then before the women there what broken lances met the sight!
Upon the shields was clearly heard the resonance of shock on shock.
Aha, how loud the bosses rang, so many to the sport did flock!

As at the harbor entrance stood the women in a lovely
band,
Did Gunther with his visitors the ship relinquish for the
land.
Himself with Queen Brunhilda came, and held her hand
in happiness ;
In splendor one another vied scintillant stone and glow-
ing dress.

With courtly affability did Lady Kriemhild forward
go
The Lady Brunhild to receive, and those within her ret-
inue.
Their alabaster hands were seen their coronets to put
away,
As each the other gave a kiss her warm affection to dis-
play.

The fair Kriemhilda then observed, in tender sentences
and bland :
Most welcome will you be to us in this my noble brother's
land,
To me and my dear mother both, and all who us allegiance
owe,
Friends and liegemen all alike. Then to the other each
bowed low.

With necks encircled by their arms did each the other oft
embrace ;
A greeting so enriched with love had never anywhere had
place,
As these two women heartily, Dame Uta and her daughter
both,
Now gave to Gunther's promised bride, and they kissed
often her sweet mouth.

When Queen Brunhilda's women all descended had upon
the strand,
By valorous young warriors were then led forward by the
hand,
With friendly tokens of respect, maids in numbers fair
to see;
And there, with all these noble ones, Brunhilda stood in
company.

Ere all the greetings over were did long delicious mo-
ments slip,
While kisses hearty were bestowed on many a youthful,
rosy lip.
They long by one another stood, this pair of queens, in
loving wise;
And many a peerless warrior rejoiced on them to feast
his eyes.

While they with eyes enraptured gazed, as others often
had before,
Such amplitude of loveliness they thought to witness never-
more
As that of these two lovely dames; which would indeed not
be a lie,
For in their beauty nought was seen of blemish or hypoc-
risy.

Who that for woman's graceful form high estimation could
provide,
Extolled, with ardor infinite, the beauty of King Gunther's
bride;
But those who better understood, and looked below the
surface, said:
Before Brunhilda must the prize for beauty be to Kriem-
hild paid.

To one another now advanced stately dame and maid as well,
And many a woman could be seen who did in every grace excel.
Canopies of silken stuff and regal tents their places found
Before the citadel of Worms; they seemed to cover all the ground.

The king's companions forward pressed the lovely women to behold.
Then Brunhild and Kriemhilda both, and all their women manifold,
Were bidden go beneath the tents, within the cooling shade to stand;
To which accompanied they were by many a swordsman of the land.

Already had the various guests their seats upon the horses found;
From lances breaking on the shields at once uprose a mighty sound.
The plain began to fill with dust, as if o'er all the land were blown
A conflagration's heavy smoke. The heroes soon themselves made known.

Upon the actions of these knights did many a maiden keep her eyes;
And Siegfried, with his warriors, on horses decked in lordly guise,
Rode often proudly to and fro before the front of many a tent.
The hero led the thousand men that him the Nibelungs had sent.

Just now Von Tronya Hagen came; and, as was counselled by the king,
With gracious air the swordsmen bade the tilting to an end to bring,
That by so great a cloud of dust the women might not be disturbed.
Without a murmur all the guests at once enthusiasm curbed.

Then said the noble Lord Gernot: Now let the horses stand at rest,
Until it cooler has become; for then can we the maidens best
Escort, if they will us permit, unto the portal of the hall.
If then the king would farther ride, be you prepared to do his will.

The passages at arms had ceased wherever lances had been bent;
And in the briefest space of time betook themselves, in many a tent,
The warriors to the maidens there, expecting pleasure thus to gain;
And therein spent delightful hours until they did the road regain.

Upon the sombre eve's approach, when sinking sun obscured the day,
And cooler it began to grow, no longer there did they delay,
But dame and knight together went toward the monarch's citadel;
And how the eyes of those gallants the damsels wooed,
I will not tell.

By energetic, prompt esquires, the horses forcibly were
spurred
Ahead of these intrepid knights, as was the custom, I have
heard,
Until before the palace gates the noble king his ride did
end.
The women then were waited on, and from their horses
helped descend.

At this conjuncture, too, the queens in concord parted
company.
Dame Uta and Kriemhilda went each her own respective
way,
Attended by her retinue, toward the house wherein she
lived;
And everywhere about was heard the sound of revelry
contrived.

In order were the seats disposed; for now the monarch
would attend
The banquet given to his guests; and by his side was seen
to stand.
The fair Brunhilda, his new queen, who had the right to
wear the crown
In this her noble husband's land. Already had she mighty
grown.

Luxurious seats were thus arranged, and also tables
weighted down
With eatables of every kind, as we have had to us made
known.
Whatever any might desire could there without default
be seen;
And seated was there with the king a multitude of lordly
men.

The high imperial chamberlains, in massive basins made
of gold,
Presented water to the guests. With wasted breath should
we be told,
By whomsoever it were said, that better service e'er ob-
tained
At any prince's wedding-feast; our faith would be un-
duly strained.

Before the master of the Rhine the proffered water had
received,
To Gunther Siegfried forward stepped, entirely of all
shame relieved,
And him reminded of the oath that he had sworn upon
his hand,
Before Brunhilda he had seen across the sea at Isen-
land.

And this is what to him he said: You swore to me upon
your hand,
That if the Queen Brunhilda came back with us to this
your land,
Your sister you would give to me. Where is now your
plighted word?
You know that in this enterprise no pains by me were
ever spared.

Then answered him the mighty king: With reason make
you this demand.
I will not break the solemn oath that I affirmed by mouth
and hand.
I you will help, as best I can, your cherished project to
pursue.
Kriemhilda thereupon was told herself before the king to
show.

Attended by her pretty maids, before the hall Kriemhilda came.

Descending with a spring the stairs did Geiselher the youth exclaim:

Now bid these gentle maidens all hence upon their way to turn;

Alone, my sister to the king within the hall must now adjourn.

Kriemhilda forward then was led to where the monarch took his stand,

Surrounded by exalted knights from many another prince's land.

Now all were bidden silence keep throughout the hall's majestic space.

At the same time did Brunhild go, and at the table take her place.

She not the slightest notion had of what was floating in the air;

Then said the noble Dankrat's son to all his men assembled there:

Assist me that my sister here Sir Siegfried for her husband take.

With one emphatic voice they said: A better choice she could not make.

To her King Gunther blandly said: My sister, with affection stirred,

In thy beneficence of heart release me from my plighted word.

I've sworn thee to a warrior; and, if thou him for husband take,

Thou wilt, in all fidelity, my solemn vow effective make.

Dear brother, said the noble maid, to do what now I hear
you say
No urgent pressing do I need; your will I joyfully
obey.
If you of me have so disposed, then let it now be done
as said.
Him to whom thou me didst give, with satisfaction shall
I wed.

With love and his excessive joy did Siegfried turn a rosy
red.
To Kriemhild earnestly the knight his overtures of service
made.
As they by one another stood a friendly circle round them
crept;
And, thus surrounded, she was asked if she the hero would
accept.

Shy, as maids are apt to be, she somewhat disconcerted
seemed;
So kind, however, Siegfried was amid his happiness un-
dreamed,
That impotent was she to scorn the offer of his princely
hand;
But promised as her spouse to take the hero of the Nether-
land.

As he was thus to her betrothed, and she affianced unto
him,
A fond affectionate embrace, without a moment's loss of
time,
By Siegfried's agitated arms was ready for the lovely
maid;
And then upon her lips a kiss in presence of them all he
laid.

The retinue thereon dispersed. As soon as this had taken place,
Were Siegfried and Kriemhilda found within their seats
the king to face,
In honor, side by side, to be served by men of dig-
nity.
The Nibelungen knights were seen the neighboring seats
to occupy.

The monarch so at table sat that Brunhild should beside
him be.
Now Kriemhild opposite she saw (and she no worse a sight
could see)
Sitting at her Siegfried's side. At this she so was moved to
sob
That drifts of heated tears began her cheeks of brilliancy
to rob.

Then said the monarch of the land: What aileth thee,
beloved wife,
That so permittest thou thine eyes to be despoiled of light
and life?
Thou hast good reason to rejoice; surrendered to thy will
have been
My land and all its fortresses, together with their valiant
men.

Far better cause have I to weep, replied the maiden, sad
and sore;
It is for thy dear sister's sake that I a heavy heart en-
dure.
I yonder her, in humble seat, beside thy base dependant
see;
Indeed, I must forever grieve that she should so degraded
be.

King Gunther thus to her replied: At present silence I
demand;
And I will, at some other time, thee let completely under-
stand
Wherefore my sister Kriemhild hath bestowed upon Sir
Siegfried been.
May she, with that intrepid knight, much happiness forever
glean.

I ever shall lament, she said, her birth and beauty in-
finite.
If only I knew where to go I willingly would take my
flight;
Nor thee by any means permit ever at my side to
lie
Until I know why Kriemhild fair as Siegfried's bride I
here espy.

King Gunther then again replied: To thee I will it all
make known.
Himself possesseth forts, as I, and lands of vast extent,
his own.
Entirely mayst thou rest assured that he a monarch is
of power,
For this I give to him as wife that lovely maid without a
peer.

For all the king might say to her her gloominess she still
retained;
Then hurriedly the table left full many a swordsman
sorely pained.
The tournament so rough became that in the castle rang
the sound;
But to the host amid his guests the time most wearisome
was found.

Much should I prefer, he thought, with my dear bride alone
to be.

And from this sentiment he could his joyful heart no
longer free,

That he, from her entrancing love, should revel in extreme
delight.

With ardor he began to look on Dame Brunhild with
eagér eyes.

The guests of their chivalric sports were bidden now an end
to make,

Because the monarch and his bride were anxious now some
rest to take.

Upon the staircase of the hall together came they face
to face,

Kriemhilda and Brunhilda both, which in all friendliness
took place.

Their retinues behind them came without an instant of
delay;

The elevated chamberlains brought lanterns in to show
the way.

The warriors then went apart who in the princes' service
were,

And many swordsmen then were seen Sir Siegfried com-
pany to bear.

The noble heroes came to where the night intended they to
pass;

And each was full of happiness at thinking how, with
sweet caress,

His consort he should overcome; which put them in a
joyful mood.

With Siegfried, during this sweet time, went all exactly
as he would.

As Siegfried, that intrepid knight, beside the fair Kriem-
hilda lay,
And to the dear, enchanting maid did delicate attentions
pay
With his most honorable love, was she to him as his own
life.
Not for a thousand other loves would he have given up
his wife.

I now will tell you nothing more of how he entertained
the maid ;
But listen to some further news of what attention Gunther
paid
To Brunhild, his athletic spouse. That celebrated cav-
alier
An easier time could well have had with many another
woman there.

Their people every one had left, as well the women as
the men ;
And soon the door was shut, to form from curiosity a
screen.
He hoped, as they together were, that now she would be
wholly his.
A long time it however was before she granted him that
bliss.

In robe of whitest linen made she placed herself within
the bed ;
The noble king reflected then: Now that for which my
heart has bled,
Through all these dilatory days, is wholly and entirely
mine.
And him, indeed, ought well to please the beauty of that
form divine.

The light that shone within the room he carefully from her
concealed ;
Then went he up toward the bed wherein his bride was
now revealed,
And close beside her laid him down. With joy the hero's
bosom swelled,
As that entrancing, lovely form at last within his arms
he held.

Caresses of the tenderest would he upon her have be-
stowed,
If she herself in any way had willing to receive them
showed ;
But she with scorn resisted him and he was troubled much
thereat.
He love was thinking to enjoy but met instead a fiendish
hate.

Most noble knight, to him she said, all this I'll thank you
to omit.
What you at present have in mind will I on no account
permit.
I still a virgin will remain, majestic king, now mark you
that,
Till I about that marriage learn. Then Gunther her be-
gan to hate.

To struggle with her he began, and badly he her garment
tore ;
The furious, insulted lass then seized a girdle that she
wore,
Constructed of the strongest lace that ever round her waist
was caught ;
Wherewith she to her gracious lord the greatest tribulation
brought.

His naked feet, as well as hands, together she securely
strung;
Then dragged him off toward the wall, where him upon
a nail she hung.
As he disturbed her in her sleep his love she utterly for-
bade;
While he, from her enormous strength, was very nearly
left for dead.

Then earnestly began to plead the one who master should
have been:
Be good enough to ease these bonds, my celebrated wife
and queen.
I undertake, most lovely dame, you never further to con-
strain;
And verily hereafter will from lying near to you re-
frain.

She questioned not how he might fare if she could quietly
repose.
Suspended had he to remain till daybreak caused the night
to close,
Until the morning's dawning light within the window shed
its gleam.
If ever he much strength possessed he little now to have
did seem.

Lord Gunther, tell me if you please, how doth it to your
joy redound
That you, the noble maiden said, hanging thus should there
be found
By your devoted chamberlains, in bondage by a woman's
hand?
To this the noble knight replied: Far worse thereafter you
would stand;

And also, I confess, to me but little credit would it
bring.
By all the virtues you possess loosen this infernal
string;
And since my honest love for you so fearfully abhor-
rent is,
I promise that my hand again shall never even touch your
dress.

Then loosened she the monarch's bonds that he not any
longer hung.
Again upon the nuptial bed beside his bride himself he
flung;
But still he lay so far away that he thereafter with her
dress
Not often into contact came, for even that gave her dis-
tress.

Their retinue by this time came, with fresh attire, select
and grand,
Of which there was, this wedding-morn, a good supply
for them on hand.
However pleased the others were depressed enough was
in his mood
The noble sovereign of the land, although beneath a crown
he stood.

As forms of etiquette decreed, by ancient custom of the
land,
Did Gunther longer not delay, but with Brunhilda took
his stand
Beneath the minster's sacred roof; and there a nuptial
mass was sung.
Thither also Siegfried came, and countless crowds about
them hung.

By regal honor, as required, prepared there was for each
to don,
As they of right could well demand, a crown and full ca-
parison.
Their consecration then took place, after which, with hand
in hand,
Beneath the royal crowns were seen together all the four
to stand.

By imposition of the sword, a full six hundred knights were
made
In honor of these fairy queens, as in veracity is
said.
The utmost joy thereat arose throughout the whole Bur-
gundian land;
And snapping javelins were heard in warrior's chivalric
hand.

Sitting in the balconies the lovely maidens scanned the
field,
And down below them saw the gleam of many a scintillat-
ing shield.
The king, however, gloomily apart from all his courtiers
stood:
Whatever other men might do observed was he in pensive
mood.

He and Siegfried quite unlike in character and temper
were;
Of what the matter was with him the noble swordsman
was aware.
Then went he up toward the king, and him to question
thus began:
How prospered it with thee last night? Explain to me
as man to man.

The host responded to his guest: Degrading shame and
foul disgrace
From my wife's fury have I been, in my own house, com-
pelled to face.
Affectionate I tried to be when I by her was quickly
bound,
And soon suspended to a nail upon the wall myself I
found.

Thereon in agony I hung throughout the night until the
day;
And while she had me hanging there upon the bed she
softly lay.
All this in friendship thou, of course, between us two wilt
let remain.
The noble Siegfried then replied: This gives me truly
cruel pain.

But I will thee a method show by which thou canst thine
anger slake.
I so will act that she to-night so near to thee her place
must take
That she no longer can withhold from thee the love that
is thy due.
The monarch listened joyfully, and off his sorrow quickly
flew.

Examine now my swollen hands and see how they have
been defiled;
She crushed them with a mighty force as if I were a little
child;
The blood, which ran all over me, gushed out from every
finger-nail.
Without a question I supposed that life within me soon
would fail.

The mighty Siegfried then replied: Everything will yet
be right;
Dissimilar indeed our lots when with our brides we lay
last night.
Thy charming sister is to me far dearer than my very
life;
And now my Lady Brunhild must before to-morrow be
thy wife.

To-night will I, without a doubt, be within thy chamber
led,
So thoroughly invisible, within my good tarnkappe
hid,
That no one ever shall suspect the artifice that I shall
play.
Give orders to thy chamberlains within their own abodes
to stay.

Thy every light will I put out, and when thou findest this
is done,
The indication let it be by which I wish to make it
known
That I have come within the room. Then will I compel
thy wife
Thy love's caresses to receive, or at her hands will lose
my life.

If thou wilt not affection show, the king replied, with
halting seized,
To my beloved virgin bride, with all the rest I well am
pleased.
Whatever thou mayst do to her, if even thou shouldst take
her life,
I could it patiently endure, for she hath proved an awful
wife.

I pledge, said Siegfried in reply, my honor and my sacred
word,
That I in love will touch her not; by me thy sister is
preferred
To any woman I have known ever on this earth to
tread.
The king implicitly believed everything that Siegfried
said.

Meanwhile in games of chivalry was joy received, and also
pain;
But now was bidden every one from tournament and noise
abstain.
Whereas the women would again their steps toward the
hall retrace
The chamberlains the crowd enjoined itself not in the
way to place.

By horses and by people both vacated was the castle
yard,
And each of these two lovely dames was by a holy bishop
led,
As they, before the noble kings, to table would again
repair;
And many a gallant warrior each one escorted to her
chair.

Beside his young, attractive wife the king in joyful long-
ing sat;
He contemplated Siegfried's pledge and meditated naught
but that.
To him it seemed as if the day was certainly full thirty
long.
Toward Brunhilda and her love his heart was drawn with
impulse strong.

He hardly could himself contain until the meal had found
an end.

Brunhilda to her chamber then did many chamberlains
attend;

And with Kriemhilda was the same, for they would now
retire to sleep,

And many valiant warriors about the two their places
keep.

Sir Siegfried of the Netherlands looked very handsome
as he sat

Beside his fair and lovely bride in pleasure unalloyed with
hate.

She lovingly caressed his hands with hers so delicate and
white,

Till suddenly before her eyes, she knew not how, he passed
from sight.

Since he had faded thus away, as they with one another
played,

To her attendants standing near the queen in trepidation
said:

I wonder what has taken place. Wherever can the king
have gone?

Or who can possibly his hand have out of mine just now
withdrawn?

And there she let the matter drop. He hastened till he
had his stand

Where he the waiting chamberlains found with burning
lights in hand.

He these extinguished, unperceived, as if the boys did out
them blow.

That Siegfried had at last arrived was Gunther thereby
made to know.

Aware was he what this implied, so ordered he to leave
the room
The maidens and the women all. When everybody thus
had gone,
That noble-minded king himself quickly locked the chamber
door
With two substantial iron bolts, by which he made it quite
secure.

Behind the curtains of the bed the light he carefully
concealed.
An entertainment soon began which bounden was to be
revealed,
Between a man of mighty strength and this delectable
young maid.
Whereat the king, as well might be, while gratified was
also sad.

Now Siegfried laid him softly down beside the maiden on
the bed.
Sir Gunther, let this stop at once, whatever you desire,
she said,
Unless to-night you wish to be reduced to suffer as be-
fore.
It yet may happen once again that pain you from my
hands endure.

Whatever she might do or say he uttered not a single
word.
The king, although he saw him not, yet all her conversa-
tion heard,
And thereby knew that secretly was very little taking
place.
Not very much upon that bed did they enjoy of calm
and peace.

He ever made the damsel think that it was Gunther lying there,
And with his sturdy arms embraced that woman born without a peer.
She threw him out from off the bed upon a bench that stood near by,
So forcibly that on the stool his head resounded in reply.

But up again with agile strength sprang the bold, undaunted man,
That he again might better try. His next endeavor he began
By trying her to overpower, but here again he came to grief.
That such defence again will be from maiden seen is past belief.

As he would her not let alone the damsel quickly sprang upright:
It is not seemly on your part to treat my linen with such spite.
Uncivil and ill-bred you are; your just desert you can't evade.
I now will bring it home to you. Thus said to him the lovely maid.

Her forcible and shapely arms she locked around the hardy knight,
And him endeavored then to bind, as with the king the former night,
That she within her bed might rest with some degree of quietude.
The tearing of her snowy robe would she avenge with promptitude.

But what availed him all his strength or stratagems of
magic art?
She let the swordsman fully know that she could well sus-
tain her part.
Supporting him with mighty strength, and letting him
her powers test,
She bore him down beside the bed, and pressed him hard
against a chest.

Alas, the sturdy hero thought, is it decreed that I my
life
Shall yield into a maiden's hand? If this be so, then every
wife,
In all the ages yet to come, toward her husband will dis-
play
A more outrageous attitude than ever yet she dared be-
tray.

The monarch everything had heard and trembled greatly
for the man;
And Siegfried, out of very shame, to get incensed with
rage began.
With vigor irresistible Brunhilda's onslaught he op-
posed;
And, full of deep anxiety, his every power against her
used.

However she might hold him down, his overwhelming
wrath and strength
So in his favor worked that he was able to arise at
length,
In spite of all that she might do. His apprehension still
was great,
As, up and down within the room, they fought together in
their hate.

King Gunther also suffered much, from deep perplexity
and care,
For many times he had to flee, for his own safety, here
and there.
They struggled so the wonder is that out of such a lusty
strife
A single one of all the three should ever issue with his
life.

King Gunther was solicitous; because of each he held his
breath;
Intensest yet was his concern lest Siegfried be exposed
to death;
For she that swordsman, certainly, had very near deprived
of life.
He gladly would, if he had dared, have aided him against
his wife.

Long time it was between the two before that conflict
great was laid,
Until again upon the bed at last he forced the vanquished
maid.
However much she might resist yet weak at length was
her defence.
On Gunther crowded many thoughts in his unbearable sus-
pense.

The king it found exceeding long till Siegfried silenced
her at length.
So forcibly she pinched his hands, with her unprecedented
strength,
That blood effused from every nail, whereby he into grief
was thrown.
But, after all, did he compel the noble maiden to dis-
own

The violent, impetuous will that hitherto she had displayed.

The monarch understood it all; but, hearing all, he nothing said.

He pressed her down upon the bed so forcibly that loud she cried.

The strength of Siegfried's mighty arm most wickedly did hurt the bride.

She made a grasp upon her hip, where she her useful girdle wore,

Expecting him therewith to bind; but he so hard upon her bore

That all her limbs began to crack, indeed the bones in all her frame.

The struggle then came to an end and she King Gunther's wife became.

My noble king, she cried aloud, pray do not me deprive of life;

Whatever I have done to thee I now will be thy duteous wife;

No more will I thy love resist, but freely yield myself to thee,

For thou decisively hast shown thou canst a woman's master be.

The warrior Siegfried then arose and left the maiden lying there,

And did as if he would remove the garments he just then did wear;

And from her finger he purloined a little treasured golden ring

Without her having taken heed, in her distress, of anything.

He also from her took away the girdle hanging at her side ;

I know not what induced him thus, unless it were excessive pride.

These things he handed to his wife, for which he later dearly paid.

Then lay together, side by side, the monarch and the lovely maid.

With kindness to her he behaved, as fitting was in this display.

Her chastity and anger both she yielded to his loving sway.

His ardent manner of approach made her a little pale at length,

And, as the consequent of love, departed her enormous strength.

Henceforward no superior powers to other women she possessed.

With all a wooer's tenderness her lovely body he caressed.

If she should try him to resist what could she ever gain therefrom?

King Gunther her completely had, with his affection, overcome.

How tenderly that warrior beside the charming damsel lay,

In demonstrations of true love, till late into the light of day!

The lordly Siegfried had meanwhile long removed himself from there ;

And he was also well received by his good wife, serene and fair.

The questions he well turned aside that she to put before
him sought,
And long from her secreted he the trinkets he with him
had brought;
Until at last, within their home, the precious gem to her
he gave
Which him, and many a warrior, untimely sent within his
grave.

Next morning did the royal host reveal a much more lively
mood
Than on the days but lately past. Then became the spirits
good,
Throughout his territory vast, of many a great and noble
one.
To those invited to the court the best of services was
done.

For fourteen happy days endured the merrymaking at
the court;
Nor ever was the sound allayed, for any time, however
short,
Of recreation of all kinds that one could think of or
devise.
And riches vast the king dispensed upon these court fes-
tivities.

The kinsmen of the noble host, as by their master they were
told
To do him honor, gave away a store of rich attire and
gold,
And silver, too, with noble steeds, to many a gallant for-
eign man.
Now those who gladly took his gifts most gladly to de-
part began.

The bold and hardy Siegfried, too, the king of all the
Netherlands,
With his ten hundred warriors — all the garments in their
hands
That they had to the Rhine conveyed, away they every-
thing did give,
The saddles and the horses, too; they knew in lordly style
to live.

Before these rich and costly gifts they could entirely all
bestow
The time was found extremely long by those who wanted
home to go.
Ere this were servants never seen released in any better
plight.
So ended this great wedding-feast, from which departed
many a knight.

ELEVENTH ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGFRIED RETURNED HOME WITH HIS WIFE

WHEN over was this festival and homeward all the
guests had gone,
To those who formed his retinue, observed King Siegmund's
noble son:
We also will ourselves prepare toward our land again to
go.
His consort much elated was when she this resolution
knew.

Thereon the princes went to him, and thus accosted him
all three:
We wish you, Siegfried, to assure that ever at your call
will be
Our service in all faithfulness till we within our graves
be laid.
He made obeisance to these lords when they to him this
offer made.

We also will with you divide, observed the youthful Geisel-
her,
The many castles and the land of which the ownership we
share,
And all that in our vast domains submissive to our sway
endures.
You with Kriemhilda shall receive the utmost portion that
is yours.

Then to the brothers of his wife the only son of Siegmund
said,
As their devoted interest to eye and ear were thus displayed:
God grant that your inheritance a blessing be to you for
life,
And also all the folk therein. It well may be that my
dear wife

Will abdicate the share thereof that you to her would gladly
give.
Where she the diadem will wear, if long enough we both
shall live,
She must far wealthier become than any other on the
earth.
What otherwise you may command your slave I am in all
I'm worth.

Then Kriemhild interrupted him: Although my land you
set at naught,
Belittle shall you not the men who well for Burgundy
have fought,
For these might any sovereign conduct with pleasure to
his land;
Thereof will I allotment have at my illustrious brother's
hand.

Now King Gernot put in a word: Take all away thou
wouldest have;
A number here thou'lt surely find who us for thee will
gladly leave.
Of thirty times one hundred men, a thousand take along
with thee
As thy domestic retinue. Kriemhilda now much wished to
see

Von Tronya Hagen brought to her, and also brave Sir
Ortewein,
To know if they and their allies would her attend upon
the Rhine.
But Hagen, when he heard of this, into a violent temper
flew,
And said: King Gunther cannot us upon one soul on earth
endue.

Others are there at his court that you upon your way can
take.
You fully know our Tronian ways, to which we no excep-
tion make;
With our three noble sovereigns we purpose henceforth to
remain,
Whose servants hitherto we've been, whose favor we would
still retain.

There they let the matter rest, and measures took from
there to flee.
As her especial following, took Kriemhild in her com-
pany
Two and thirty lovely maids and half a thousand hardy
men,
With whom the Margrave Eckewart travelled in Kriem-
hilda's train.

The visitors now took their leave, squire and most ex-
alted knight,
Enchanting maid and stately dame, according to estab-
lished right.
With kisses intermixed with tears the bonds of home at
last were cleft;
With satisfaction every one King Gunther's land behind
him left.

Escorted by their many friends a distance were they on
their way ;
And anywhere upon the road that they at night desired
to stay,
In all the country of the kings were lodgings for them
ready found.
Swift messengers were also sent with promptitude to King
Siegmond,

The information to convey to him and Mistress Siegelind,
Their son they very soon would see home again with Uta's
child,
Kriemhilda, loveliest of maids, from far-off Worms upon
the Rhine.
No news could be by them received more gratifying and
benign.

Oh, glad am I, King Siegmund said, that I the happy day
shall see,
When beautiful Kriemhilda here with crown upon her
head shall be:
An increase great in value that to my inheritance will
bring.
Dear Siegfried, my beloved son, himself shall be the coun-
try's king.

Queen Siegelind the envoys gave red velvet garments
richly made,
With gold and silver furthermore, by which their services
she paid.
Delighted was she at the news conveyed to her of Siegfried's
plan ;
In haste the women of her court their raiment to prepare
began.

Informed she was of all who would with Siegfried come
into her land;

Then ordered she commodious seats to be constructed out
of hand

Whenever he before his friends should undertake the regal
sway.

The vassals of King Siegmund then went forth to meet
them on the way.

Who better ever were received to me are utterly un-
known,

Than were the heroes who had come as visitors to Sieg-
mund's throne.

His mother Siegelind rode forth Kriemhilda on her way
to meet,

With numbers of her lovely dames, as well as many a hardy
knight.

A day were they upon the road ere they upon the guests
set eyes.

To friends and strangers all alike did great annoyances
arise;

Till luckily they came at last up to a fort for size re-
nowned,

That Xanten designated was, in which they afterward
were crowned.

With happy heart and smiling lips did Siegelind and Sieg-
mund kiss

Again and many times again, Queen Uta's daughter, in
their bliss,

And Siegfried, too, the warrior. Of sorrow now were they
relieved;

And all of their grand retinue were joyfully and well
received.

Conducted were the visitors directly to King Siegmund's
hall;
The beautiful young damsels then were aided, as was nat-
ural,
From off their horses to descend; and many a bold, heroic
man
Those lovely women now to serve with assiduity be-
gan.

How rich soe'er the wedding-feast upon the Rhine itself
had shown,
Yet given to the heroes here were costlier gifts of dress
alone,
Than anything, in all their lives, they ever had a chance
to wear.
Of their exceeding store of wealth could we great wonders
well declare.

Thus in honor sat they all, and had enough with much
to spare.
What richly gold-embroidered clothes their many follow-
ers did wear!
Most costly gems and laces fine woven in the cloth were
seen.
Thus zealously did Siegelind well entertain the lovely
queen.

Then standing up before his friends, King Siegmund now
began to say:
To all my kin and many friends I gravely here announce
to-day
That Siegfried, my beloved son, henceforward here the
crown shall wear.
This proclamation gratefully those of the Netherlands did
hear.

To him committed he the crown, with jurisdiction in the
land
Of which he now was lord and king. When judgment
came into his hand,
Or he acquitted or condemned, with so much fairness was
it done,
That all sustained a wholesome fear of Siegelinda's worthy
son.

In honor and respect he lived, so much can certainly be
said,
And exercised his kingly rule until a half-score years had
fled,
When to the good and lovely queen was born a noble son
and heir,
By which the monarch's many friends saw fulfilled their
wishes fair.

The infant soon they had baptized, and gave the little
one the name
Of Gunther, for his uncle's sake, which never could to him
bring shame.
In similar mould should he be cast he would become a
hardy knight;
With vigilance was he brought up, wherein they acted as
was right.

At just about the selfsame time Queen Siegelinda passed
away.
Then took the noble Uta's child upon herself supremest
sway,
As well became within the land so powerful and rich a
queen.
For her whom death had taken off was universal mourning
seen.

Yonder also on the Rhine, as current information showed,
Upon the mighty Gunther was an infant son and heir bestowed
By the beautiful Brunhild, within their home in Burgundy;
Who designated Siegfried was their high regard to signify.

What pains and ever jealous care were to his education brought!
By Gunther, master of the court, was bidden all to him be taught
That he could possibly require. Should he grow up to man's estate,
Alas, how soon, through his own kin, unhappiness would be his fate!

Now at all times was heard report of what continually was said,
Of how, in style magnificent, the hardy swordsmen undismayed,
At all the seasons of the year, spent the time in Siegmund's land.
And so King Gunther also lived with boon companions at command.

As all the Nibelungenland was under Siegfried's regal sway,
Not any of his relatives could treasures vast as he display.
He, too, had Schilbung's warriors, and all the property of both;
Accordingly the more was filled with arrogance that hardy youth.

The treasure was of greater worth than any hero yet had
won,
And he who first its owner was was governed by this dar-
ing man:
Now it before a mountain base had he by force secured
in strife,
Wherein was many a hardy knight by his right arm de-
prived of life.

High honors to the full he had, and could he but the half
display
Must everybody be constrained of this most noble knight
to say,
That he the worthiest hero was that ever sat upon a
horse.
Afraid of him was every one for reasons of the utmost
force.

TWELFTH ADVENTURE

HOW GUNTHER INVITED SIEGFRIED TO A FESTIVAL

A SINGLE day did not go by but Queen Brunhilda had in mind:
My noble Lady Kriemhild I extremely high and mighty find;
Sir Siegfried now her husband is, who, though a vassal of our king,
Since many days have passed away doth very meagre service bring.

This carried she within her heart, but not a word did she express.
That strangers to her they remained gave her unlimited distress.
Why tribute money was not paid by those within that prince's land,
How it was that this arose she much would like to understand.

From Gunther she essayed to learn if it would truly be in vain
For her to think, as time went by, that Kriemhild she might see again.
Confided she alone to him with what her thoughts were occupied.
The king, however, was not pleased with these reflections of his bride.

By what means, asked the mighty king, do you imagine we
could bring
Her hither to this land again? Impossible is such a
thing.
Too far away from us they dwell; to ask her here I should
not dare.
To him this answer Brunhild gave, with haughty and
imperious air:

However powerful and rich the vassal of a king may
be,
Whatever may his lord command, in that he always must
obey.
A smile crept over Gunther's face at this expression of
the queen.
But little he of duty thought when Siegfried by his side
had been.

My dearest lord, she further said, by all the love that I
you bear,
Assist me now to bring about that Siegfried and your
sister dear
Anew to this your land may come, and we them both may
see again.
From nothing else upon the earth could greater pleasure
I obtain.

Your sister's noble qualities, her loftiness of heart and
mind,
When I upon these meditate, what profit and delight I
find!
How we together used to sit when I agreed to be your
wife!
That she the gallant Siegfried chose will honor her to
end of life.

So long did she the king implore that finally to her he
said:

Aware you are that I no guests would sooner ask my land
to tread.

You need not further me entreat; my messengers I will
assign,

And invitations send to both to visit us upon the
Rhine.

Thereat the queen to him replied: To me be good enough
to say

When you these envoys will despatch, or let me know upon
what day

Our charming friends I may expect to make their advent
in our land;

And tell me also, in advance, who those may be whom you
will send.

Indeed I will, replied the king; I thirty men will have now
sought,

And sent at once across to them. These were all before him
brought,

The intimation to receive that he would send to Siegfried's
land.

Brunhilda then on them bestowed much apparel rich and
grand.

The king these men instructed thus: Ye warriors from
me shall say,

And nothing secret shall you keep of all that you entrust
I may,

To Siegfried, mighty warrior, and that exalted sister
mine,

That not to any on the earth more strongly doth my heart
incline,

And heartily invite them both to come to us upon the
Rhine;

Then we in gratitude to them shall everlastingly combine.

Before the sun again shall turn, I trust that he and all
his men

Will be with us; and every one to do them honor will be
seen.

To Siegmund, also, in my name, convey our homage and
esteem,

And say that I and all my friends attached shall ever be
to him.

My sister be you sure to beg that she for nothing will
omit

To come again among her friends; no feast could her
so well befit.

Brunhilda and Queen Uta both, and all the women to be
found,

Their services commended then to noble Siegfried's dis-
tant land,

To all the amiable dames, and many a knight serene and
gay.

According to the royal will the envoys soon were on their
way.

All ready for the road they stood; the needful horses and
attire

Before them were together led; then from the land did
they retire.

They hastened them unto the goal at their protracted jour-
ney's end.

The monarch with these messengers a goodly company
did send.

Within the land they all arrived before a dozen days were
spent;
And at the Nibelungen fort, whither they had all been
sent,
On the Norwegian boundary they found the bold, in-
trepid knight.
Horses and people all were tired, as well from such a jaunt
they might.

Siegfried and Kriemhilda both were soon apprised, at this
abode,
That warriors had there arrived who wore attire of such
a mode
As with the good Burgundians it was the custom to dis-
play.
They quickly from the bed arose whereon reposing then
they lay.

And one of her fair maids she bade toward a window now
to go;
Who then the valiant Garie saw standing in the yard
below,
As well as those associates who thither with him had been
sent.
This news gave comfort to a heart so long with tribula-
tion rent.

She to her husband then exclaimed: Look out and see
them down below,
Who with the sturdy Garie are within our courtyard stand-
ing now,
And whom my brother Gunther sends hither to us from
the Rhine.
Then the mighty Siegfried said: They all shall have a
welcome fine.

Their retinue all quickly ran to where the visitors were
seen,
And each, upon his own account, spake words of kindli-
ness serene,
The very best within his power, to those good messengers
of peace.
Their gathering within his land King Siegmund greatly
did rejoice.

For Garie lodgings were prepared, and all who in his
service wrought,
And care was given to their steeds. The messengers were
early brought
Within the castle to the place where Siegfried and Kriem-
hilda sat;
These envoys glad were they to see and surely gave no
sign of hate.

The royal master and his wife at once arose that they
might stand
To Garie properly receive from out the great Bur-
gundian land,
With all his fellow travellers, who Gunther's vassalage
sustain;
The margrave Garie then was bid on foot not longer to
remain.

Our message let us you present before we think of sitting
down;
Us travel-wearied visitors allow to stand till we have
shown
You what the royal message is, that unto you by us is
sent
By Gunther and Brunhilda both, whose health remaineth
excellent;

And what your mother Uta hath commanded by us to be
brought,
As well as Geiselher, and, too, your other brother, Lord
Gernot,
And all who dearest are to you; by whom is sent this
honored band,
To proffer you their services, from out the great Bur-
gundian land.

May God, said Siegfried, them reward; full perfectly am
I aware
Of all their loving sentiments, fidelity, and friendly
care;
Their sister also shares my thoughts. I hope you further
will us tell
If our profoundly valued friends are in their situation
well.

Since we took our departure thence, hath any to them
evil done,
My wife's devoted brothers three? Let that to me be
fully known.
I always in fidelity would help their honor to sus-
tain,
And all their enemies compel of my assistance to
complain.

Then said, in his august reply, the noble Garie, faithful
knight:
Good qualities they exercise, with joyfulness and spirits
bright.
They ask you to the Rhine to come to join in courtly
festival;
With pleasure keen they you will see, as you without a doubt
must feel.

My lady also they invite with you thereat her grace to
lend,
So soon as winter in our land hath come to its accustomed
end;
Before the height of summer sun they would with great
delight you see.
To this the mighty Siegfried said: Hard would that to
compass be.

The noble Garie further urged, the hero from Burgundian
land:
Your mother Uta, noble dame, hath deigned us also to
command,
With Lords Gernot and Geiselher, to hope that you will
not refuse.
Of placing you so far away they daily do the fates
accuse.

Brunhilda, my respected queen, as well as each attendant
lass,
Will greatly at the news rejoice, if ever it can come to
pass
That they may see you once again; high will rise their
spirits thence.
The fair Kriemhilda realized delight from this in-
telligence.

To her Lord Garie was of kin, so him the host desired to
rest,
Nor longer did he then delay to order wine for every
guest.
King Siegmund now appearance made, and when he saw
the messengers
He uttered many friendly words to those Burgundian
foreigners.

Welcome are you warriors, who mighty Gunther's vassals
are.

Since Siegfried, my beloved son, hath Kriemhild, the
maiden fair,

Selected for his lovely wife, we ought more often you to
see

In this our land; between us then eternal brotherhood
would be.

They answered that, if so he wished, they willingly would
come again;

The pleasure now by them received put an end to all
their pain.

The messengers were bidden sit, and food was then to
them conveyed,

Of which the noble Siegfried had enough before his guests
displayed.

For fully nine completed days must they within that land
remain;

On which account at length began these agile warriors
to complain,

Lest they should never thence depart to find again their
native land.

King Siegfried to his counsellors to come to him did send
command,

To give to him their best advice about his going to the
Rhine.

King Gunther, and his brethren too, the brothers of your
noble queen,

Have sent for me and my good wife, a festival with them
to share.

I willingly to him should go were not his land from ours
so far.

They also have Kriemhilda asked with me unto their court
to go.

Admonish us, devoted friends, how can we manage that
to do?

Should I an army have to lead across full thirty sov-
ereigns' lands,

Instantly to them should aid forthcoming be at Siegfried's
hands?

His warriors gave him this reply: If you are in the mood
to go

To this august festivity, we will advise you what to
do:

You ought a thousand men, at least, to lead as escort to
the Rhine,

That so, with these Burgundians, the glory of our land
may shine.

King Siegmund of the Netherlands now interrupted with
a word:

If you this feast would patronize, why have I nothing
of it heard?

The journey with you I will make, if you thereover are
content;

A hundred swordsmen I will lead so much your escort
to augment.

And will you, then, loved father mine, bestow on us your
company?

Said the hardy Siegfried then; a pleasure that will be
to me.

Our land behind me I will leave when shall a dozen days
expire.

To all who on them should attend were given horses and
attire.

As now the king decided had himself at this great feast
to show,
The agile messengers again permitted homeward were
to go.
For all the brothers of his wife a message to the Rhine
he sent,
That he with utmost cheerfulness would join them in their
merriment.

Sir Siegfried and Kriemhilda both, so we have often heard
it said,
Such presents to the envoys gave, that all the horses with
them led
Could not convey them to their home. He truly was a
wealthy man.
Their sumpter-horses sent they on and joyfully their trip
began.

Siegmund and Siegfried, too, alike gave to their people
garments prime ;
And Eckewart, the margrave bold, without a moment's loss
of time,
Had raiment for the women sought, the most expensive
to be found,
Or possibly to be procured on any part of Siegfried's
ground.

The saddles all as well as shields were ready got in goodly
show ;
To knights and women all alike who bidden were with
them to go,
Was given everything they wished, that out of nothing
should they run.
With him conducted to his friends were numbers of exalted
men.

The messengers turned quickly back and hastened off
with all their might;
Then came to the Burgundians Lord Garie, the exalted
knight,
And royally was he received. To get them down they all
contrived
From ambling horse and prancing steed as they at Gun-
ther's hall arrived.

Both old and young together flocked, at such events a
usual sight,
And asked about the latest news. To them replied the
noble knight:
When I have told it to the king it also will by you be
known.
He went with his companions in and was to Gunther
quickly shown.

From his excessive joy the king sprang with vigor from
his chair.
That they so early had returned Brunhilda, lovely queen
and fair,
Her hearty thanks now did not spare. Then to the mes-
sengers he said:
With Siegfried how do matters go, from whom affection
I have had?

The hardy Garie then replied: From happiness became he
red,
Your sister too as well as he. More joyful news was
never sped
By worthy and respected friends to any man on earth
before,
As I to Siegfried, at your will, and his illustrious father,
bore.

Then to the worthy margrave said the noble monarch's
lovely dame:

Inform us if Kriemhilda comes. Doth until now her grace-
ful frame

That celebrated charm retain, which envy would in all
excite?

They both, he said, intend to come, and also many a famous
knight.

Queen Uta, too, the messengers without delay had to her
brought;

And by the way she questioned them the information
that she sought

Was very easily divined. Was Kriemhild well in her
new home?

The answer was that very soon she back upon the Rhine
would come.

Nor did there long remain concealed the costly presents
manifold

That Siegfried had on them bestowed, the rich apparel
and the gold.

To all the vassals of the kings was everything minutely
shown,

And for his generosity were honors great upon him
thrown.

Then Hagen jealously remarked: He well unsparingly
may give;

His riches all he could not spend should even he forever
live.

The treasure of the Nibelungs is carried in that monarch's
hand.

Would that it might some day come here to this our own
Burgundian land!

Greatly indeed the knights rejoiced in expectation at
the court
That they would come so speedily. Engaged in place of
every sort,
From early morn to sun's decline, the vassals of the king
were seen.
Erected most luxurious seats before the citadel had
been.

Hunold, celebrated knight, and Sindold, swordsman good
and bold,
Had very little time to spare. The offices the two did
hold
The steward and cupbearer were, and they built stands
in rising banks;
Also was helpful Ortewein, for which King Gunther gave
him thanks.

Then as to Rumold, kitchen chief, how he their duties
made discharge
All those who practised under him, with many a seething
cauldron large,
With baking and with boiling pan! And, oh, what things
therein were found!
For all were ample seats prepared who coming were upon
that ground.

The labors of the women, too, were not the least that e'er
were known.
Their new apparel they prepared, whereon they many a
precious stone,
Whose rays bedazzled far and wide, embroidered in among
the gold;
And when these dresses they put on was joyful many a
warrior bold.

THIRTEENTH ADVENTURE

HOW THEY JOURNEYED TO THE FESTIVAL

OF these and their anxieties, at present we our leave
will take;
And of the Queen Kriemhilda now and her enchanting
maidens speak;
Of how they travelled to the Rhine from out the Nibelung-
enland.
Ere this no horses ever bore so much attire or half so
grand.

Full many a massive travelling-chest upon the road did
they transmit.
Among his friends Sir Siegfried rode, a gallant sword-
man every whit,
With Queen Kriemhilda at his side, and joyous hearts
along they bore.
Yet was there soon for every one consummate bitterness
in store.

Behind at home they let remain their much beloved infant
son,
In charge of his devoted nurse; no otherwise could it be
done.
The holiday that they had planned, for him a vast afflic-
tion bore,
And neither of his parents saw that child adored forever-
more.

The good King Siegmund also went away with them out
of his land;
Could he have had a glimmering of what, in time so near
at hand,
Would issue from this festival, he of a truth would not
have gone;
For greater injury to him in all the world could not be
done.

Their coming to announce betimes were emissaries forward
sent.
To meet them on the road advanced, in lordly style and
sentiment,
A company of Uta's friends and Gunther's swordsmen
of renown.
The host commanded greetings warm to these beloved
guests be shown.

Toward Brunhilda went he then where he the lady sitting
found.
As did my sister you receive, when you set foot upon this
ground,
So it is now my earnest wish that you do Siegfried's wife
receive.
That gladly shall I do, she said, to her most lovingly I
cleave.

At this remarked the mighty king: To-morrow morning
they arrive,
So not a moment must you lose, if you intend them to
receive,
And if you do not them desire us in our castle to sur-
prise;
Not often unto us approach such highly valued friends
as these.

She bade her women all, and maids, without the slightest
waste of time,
Apparel suitable to seek, the very best that they could
find,
For those within her retinue, before the noble guests to
wear.
Right willingly she did it too, that truthfully can I
declare.

Also hastened them to meet King Gunther's men in goodly
show;
His roll entire of warriors he ordered out with him to
go.
There also went the noble queen in haughty and majestic
state.
And they the welcome visitors entreated well, with joy
elate.

What lofty honors they bestowed on those who now had
hither flown!
Even more, to them it seemed, than had the Queen Kriem-
hilda shown
To Brunhild, when she her received into the land of Bur-
gundy;
And every one who it observed was filled with joyous
sympathy.

Siegfried now had just arrived, with all his mighty
retinue;
The noble heroes then were seen, turning quickly to and
fro,
Everywhere upon the plain, in vast unnumbered multi-
tude.
From rising dust and press of folk could nobody himself
seclude.

Soon as the monarch of the land Siegfried there before him
spied,
And also Siegemund, the king, he forward came and kindly
said:
My hearty welcome pray accept, you and all these friends
of mine;
We all shall in high spirits be at this good enterprise of
thine.

May God reward you, Siegmund said, the faithful and ex-
alted man;
Since Siegfried, my beloved son, your friendship to secure
began,
With all my heart have I desired to look for once upon
your face.
In answer to him Gunther said: I'm glad it so hath come
to pass.

The noble Siegfried was received, as only rightly could
be done,
With many marks of high esteem, for he was loved by every
one.
In this with gallantry took part the lords Gernot and
Geiselher.
Such entertainment cherished guests quite possibly did
never share.

On one another could the queens gaze with satisfaction
there.
The saddles quickly emptied now, and many a stately
lady fair
By valorous, heroic hands was lifted down upon the
grass.
Who anxious woman is to serve will seldom idle hours
pass.

To one another then came up the two young matrons in
delight.

Rejoice in exultation loud did many a fine and noble
knight,

That each the other should receive in so benevolent a
guise.

And many warriors could be seen waiting on fair maidens'
eyes.

The members of the retinues took one another by the
hand,

Men and women curtseying wherever they were found to
stand;

And kissing one another there could many a maiden fair
be seen.

This with pleasure looked upon both the gallant princes'
men.

No longer there did they delay, but rode away toward
the town.

The noble host his honored guests commanded plainly to
be shown

How great a joy it was to all to see them on Burgundian
ground.

Many a sprightly tournament its place before the damsels
found.

Von Tronya Hagen well in these, and also valiant
Ortewein,

By vigorous displays of skill, in plenitude of strength
did shine.

Whatever either might command, no sooner said than it
was done.

By them toward the visitors was much of useful service
shown.

Resounding shields were audible outside the massive castle door,
As blow and thrust were interchanged. There whiled away
full many an hour
The royal host with all his guests, till every one had
entered in.
In many a game of chivalry away the merry hours did
spin.

Joyously they now drew up before the great reception
hall.
Many a tasteful covering, rich, well-cut and good
withal,
Upon the saddles of the steeds, whereon the lovely women
rode,
Hanging far below was seen. Soon themselves the servants
showed.

The rooms for them to occupy the visitors were quickly
shown.
And often was Brunhilda seen with scrutinizing glances
thrown
Upon Kriemhilda's radiant form, which beautiful enough
did look;
The brightness of well-burnished gold her lovely counte-
nance betook.

On every hand could now be heard at Worms entirely
through the town,
Rejoicings of the retinues. King Gunther sent an order
down
To Dankwart, who his marshal was, to see that all was
pleasant made;
And this was done; the visitors to proper lodgings were
conveyed.

Within as well as out-of-doors was food supplied in ample store;
Such good attention they received as guests had never had before.
Whatever any one could wish with hearty will did they provide;
So rich was this benignant king that nothing was to them denied.

They in affection well were served, without a sign of any hate.
The king with his illustrious guests before the festal table sat.
The noble Siegfried had his seat where he in former days had done;
To table with the swordsmen went full many an illustrious one.

Twelve hundred hardy warriors to take their places now were seen
With him before the social board. Then Brunhild, that most stately queen,
Began to think no servitor could ever richer be than he,
Yet kindly unto him she felt, and hoped he prosperous might be.

As evening cast its shade around, and thus the noble monarch sat,
Was many a fine and costly dress with upset wine made very wet;
And now cup-bearers of the king about the table made their way,
Replenishing untiringly the glasses that should need betray.

According to formalities at court festivities observed,
The maids and women all, betimes, to their repose from table stirred.
From wheresoever any came the host to him did care outreach;
In honor and in friendliness was great abundance given each.

As night was drawing to an end, and dawning rays of morning shone,
Taken from the travelling-chests was many a costly precious stone,
Glistening on the rich attire, worked therein by woman's hand.
Out of the cases now they sought many dresses rich and grand.

Ere yet the day had fully come, before the dining-hall were found
Many knights with their esquires, from whom arose a mighty sound
Of voices in an early mass, which for the king was being sung.
For those young heroes riding thus the king had thanks upon his tongue.

Then the sackbuts sounded loud, and much the air did agitate;
From clarions, as well as flutes, the perturbation was so great
That from the spacious citadel the echo none in Worms did spare.
Upon their horses quickly sprang the valiant heroes everywhere.

Thereon arose within the land of joust and tournament
the sound,
From numbers of bold warriors; and many a one thereat
was found
Whose young and animated heart pulsatd high with
sheer delight.
Protected by the shields was seen many a bold and valiant
knight.

Behind the windows of the hall the ceremonious matrons
sat,
And many a fair enchanting maid in gay apparel there
did chat.
Below inspected they the sports of many a bold and
valorous man.
The host among his many friends himself to take a part
began.

Thus expended they the time, which never seemed to them
too long.
These now to the cathedral called many a massive bell and
gong.
The women's horses soon arrived and thither they to ride
began.
Behind the two majestic queens followed many a valiant
man.

Before the church alighted they and stood about upon
the grass.
No enmity toward the guests did Queen Brunhilda yet
possess.
Beneath their coronets they went, both, within the spacious
kirk;
But soon their love away had fled by jealousy's accursed
work.

After the service had been sung they further their procession made,
Amid the plaudits of the crowd. Then joyfully their course they laid
Toward the tables of the king. They did not their enjoyment stay
At these august festivities till close upon the eleventh day.

In privacy the queen now mused: Suspense no longer can I bear;
Whatever may the upshot be, Kriemhilda must to me declare
Why doth her husband so neglect his tribute unto us to pay,
Since he our feudatory is. This question I will not delay.

Thus she kept in view the hour, as her the Evil One inclined,
When she the great festivity and joyous sports to grief consigned.
What lay so heavy at her heart speedily must come to light;
In consequence were many lands plunged in grief by sorry spite.

FOURTEENTH ADVENTURE

THE QUARREL OF THE QUEENS .

ONE day, before the evensong, was heard a thundering
acclaim,
That from the many warriors below within the courtyard
came.
At games of chivalry they played, for merely recreation's
sake,
And haste to view the merriment did many a man and
woman make.

The eminent and mighty queens together sat the games to
watch,
And thought upon two warriors of whom was each without
a match.
At last the lovely Kriemhild said: For husband such a
man have I,
That well might all this kingdom be subjected to his
sovereignty.

To this the dame Brunhilda said: I see not well how that
could be.
If not another person lived upon this earth than thou and
he,
Then possibly it might arise that he the kingdom should
command;
But long as Gunther has his life it never thus will come
to hand.

Kriemhilda then in turn replied: Observe him now as there
he stands;
How he, in might and majesty, all other swordsmen far
transcends,
As doth the radiance of the moon in glory every star
excel,
On which account within me must a cheerful spirit ever
dwell.

But Brunhild answered yet again: However brave thy
husband be,
However handsome and sincere, yet higher far in his
degree
Doth Gunther stand, the warrior, the noble brother of
thy care,
Who must above all monarchs be, as you most surely are
aware.

Yet still again Kriemhilda spake: Such virtues in my
husband run,
That not without sufficient cause hath he from me such
homage won.
In various and many things with him transcendence doth
inhere.
Believest, Brunhild, what I say? He without doubt is
Gunther's peer.

It seems, Kriemhilda, in thy wrath that me thou hast
misunderstood;
My speaking in this way to thee is not without a reason
good.
I heard it by them both affirmed, when they my eyes
did first invade,
And when the king his royal will effected in the games
we played,

And at the selfsame time my love, in true chivalric fashion,
won;
Asserted Siegfried then himself, that he as Gunther's
man was known.
I thus consider him as mine: himself I heard it plainly
state.
To this the fair Kriemhilda said: Unhappy then had been
my fate.

How could my noble brothers all have given their complete
assent,
To have their only sister's life with one of their de-
pendants spent?
Brunhilda, therefore I will thee in friendly fellowship
request,
Henceforward of thy courtesy to cease with me such idle
jest.

The noble queen to this replied: Desist I certainly shall
not.
Why should I so many knights absolve from payment of
their scot,
Who, with the swordsman mentioned now, to us a vassal's
service owe?
The beautiful Kriemhilda now extremely wroth began to
grow.

Thou yet wilt have it to renounce, for in this world, as thou
wilt see,
He never service will thee yield. Of nobler blood, indeed,
is he
Than my good brother Gunther e'en, the warrior whom all
do dread.
Unsay at once the foolish things that unto me thou now
hast said.

And ever must I feel surprise, if he be thine in
vassalage,
And thou canst now against us twain such ample power
disengage,
Why he so long hath unto thee his tribute-money failed
to pay.
With thine unbridled arrogance would I with reason do
away.

Thyself thou vauntest overmuch, remarked again the noble
queen ;
Now, after all that thou hast said, it manifestly shall be
seen
If honor unto thee be paid as high as that received by
me.
At length the noble women both were in a rage of high
degree.

Further yet Kriemhilda said: That soon to thee shall
be made known ;
Since thou my Siegfried dost presume to claim as vassal
of thine own,
So to the men of both the kings before this evening I
will show
If I, in front of Gunther's queen, within the minster dare
to go.

I speedily will let thee know that I both noble am and
free,
And that my husband higher is than thine can ever hope
to be.
I will not thus insulted be, as soon distinctly shall be
seen ;
Ere night approaches thou shalt see how this ignoble serf
of thine

Than any knight of Burgundy shall have at court more
honor shown.

I claim to be of higher rank than ever yet by one was
known,

The daughter of a regal prince, who yet the crown with
justice wore.

These queens to one another now the most ferocious anger
bore.

Then Brunhild spake another word: If thou thyself no
vassal rate,

Then wilt thou graciously thyself and all thy women
separate

From my attendant retinue, when we toward the minster
go.

It verily, Kriemhilda said, is that which I shall surely
do.

Yourselves array ye, maidens mine, Kriemhilda further did
exclaim,

If you would now your mistress see set free from every trace
of shame;

Then let it on this day be seen that grand apparel you
possess;

She yet shall fully contradict what did her speech just
now express.

To this no urging needed they; they looked up all their
best attire,

And soon in all their finery could one these women all
admire;

The monarch's wife proceeded then, with all her brilliant
retinue;

And clad as one might wish to see was beautiful Kriem-
hilda too,

As well as three and forty maids, who with her travelled
to the Rhine,
And wore those soft Arabian stuffs, than which is nothing
half so fine.
In this way to the minster came the lovely maidens thither
bound,
Where them awaiting at the door King Siegfried's war-
riors they found.

In wonder were the people all at what could possibly have
been
That these two admirable queens should separated now
be seen,
And not with one another walk as they had always done
before.
This did many a hardy knight in grief and misery de-
plore.

Before the great cathedral stood the wife of Gunther,
noble king;
And many a swordsman brave was found, in pleasant chat-
ter dallying
With the lovely women there, who round about her kept
their post.
The fair Kriemhilda then appeared with her supremely
vested host.

What garments ever had before by child of noble knight
been worn,
Compared with her fine retinue were but as wind in
passing borne.
So fine in her attire was she, that thirty monarchs' wives,
I ween,
Could no such gorgeousness display as on her garments
rich was seen.

Whatever any might have wished by no one there could
it be said,
That he such beautiful array had ever seen before dis-
played
As on these lovely maids of hers so finely at that moment
shone.
Brunhilda much she wished to vex or this Kriemhilda had
not done.

Before the great cathedral doors together face to face
they met.
The mistress of the monarch's house, with savage jealousy
beset,
Commanded Kriemhild haughtily no further on a step to
tread:
Before the consort of the king shall no one go, to vassal
wed.

To this the fair Kriemhilda said, and very angry was her
mood:
If thou wouldst silence now preserve it would appear
extremely good.
Thy body, beautiful and fair, disgraced thou hast for
all thy life;
Can concubine of any man become a noble sovereign's
wife?

Whom callest thou a concubine? in anger asked the
monarch's wife.
That do I thee, Kriemhilda said; thy body, with such
graces rife,
My husband Siegfried was the man to whom in love it
first hath gone;
My brother surely it was not who thee from celibacy
won.

Wherever had thy senses flown? Deceit indeed there was
in thee.

How gavest thou thyself to him if he thy humble vassal
be?

I hear, Kriemhilda further said, without a reason thee
complain.

In very truth, Brunhilda said, to Gunther I will this
explain.

And what regard have I for that? Thy arrogance hath
thee deceived.

In conversation me thou hast into thy vassalage re-
ceived.

Thou in fidelity must know that this will ever pain
afford;

True friendship nevermore can I in future unto thee
accord.

Brunhilda now began to weep. Kriemhilda did not there
delay,

But in before the monarch's wife within the minster made
her way

With all her lovely retinue. There then arose a deadly
hate,

And many a scintillating eye thereat was much bedimmed
and wet.

Whether God was served in prayer, or praise went above
in song,

Brunhilda in impatience found the time employed to be
too long.

In mind she much excited was, and very gloomy in her
mood;

For which must ruefully atone many a warrior brave and
good.

Brunhilda with her women went before the minster to
appear;
She thought, with agitated heart: More from Kriemhilda
must I hear,
Of what so loud she me accused, the terrible and sharp-
tongued shrew!
If he have boasted of this thing he soon to life shall bid
adieu.

And now the noble Kriemhild came, with many a bold in-
trepid man.
Stop thou there where now thou art, Brunhilda then
to her began.
Thou hast me called a concubine; thy evidence now let
us see.
Heartrending, as thou well must know, this accusation
is to me.

The beautiful Kriemhilda said: Wilt thou from passing
hinder me?
As evidence I bring the gold that on my finger you can
see.
To me was that by Siegfried brought after he beside thee
lay.
Before had Brunhild never passed so sorrowful and sad a
day.

That gold I recognize, she said; it stolen was and then
retained;
For many years, most wickedly, it hidden from me hath
remained.
Discover can I fully now who it abstracted from my
home.
By this time had the women both to height of indignation
come.

The lovely Kriemhild spake again: I will not thief be
made appear;
Far better hadst thou silence kept if honor be to thee
so dear.
This girdle too is evidence that round about my waist doth
span
That I to thee no lie have told: Siegfried was indeed thy
man.

Made of silk from Nineveh a cestus she around her
wore,
Beset with many a costly gem whose excellence could all
adore.
When Brunhild got a sight of that she lustily began to
cry.
Of this must Gunther now be told, and all who owe him
fealty.

Then exclaimed the country's queen: Hither send at once
to me
The mighty monarch of the Rhine, and he shall hear
without delay
How much that sister dear of his my honored name doth
undermine.
Before the people she hath said that I am Siegfried's
concubine.

The monarch with his warriors came. As soon as he saw
weeping there
Brunhilda, his beloved one, he said to her with kindly
air:
From whom, my venerated wife, have you a grievance to
withstand?
She thus responded to the king: Dejected I am forced to
stand.

My honor all Kriemhilda would, that dear, beloved sister
thine,
Before the people rob me of, and therefore I to thee
complain.
Asserted hath she here that I the mistress of her husband
am.
The king to her sincerely said: Then evil hath she done
extreme.

My girdle she presumes to wear, that long ago from me
was torn;
The ring, moreover, that I lost. Would that I had not
been born;
Intensely that must I regret. If thou, my lord, do not me
free
From such an ignominious shame I nevermore can honor
thee.

To this the angry Gunther said: Him hither call to an-
swer this.
If he have boasted such a thing he openly will it con-
fess;
If not he then will it deny, that hero of the Nether-
land.
The hardy Siegfried, thereupon, was expeditiously at
hand.

When the swordsman Siegfried saw such melancholy round
him spread,
And could not tell the reason why, he speedily and warmly
said:
For what do all these women weep? At once let that to
me appear;
And furthermore on what account am I in this way sum-
moned here?

King Gunther thus to him replied: My people all are
greatly vexed.

Some news my wife Brunhilda brings, in which thou art
expressly taxed

With having given forth the boast that her affection thou
first won.

Thy wife Kriemhilda so asserts. Hast thou, brave sword-
man, likewise done?

Never, Siegfried said at once, and if she such a thing
hath said,

Not any more will I take rest till she the penalty hath
paid,

And I thereof myself have cleared. Before thy whole
majestic host,

With my most solemn oath I say, I never made this idle
boast.

Then said the monarch of the Rhine: So let it now at
once befall;

The oath that you have offered us let now be sworn before
us all;

And then of everything that's wrong I you will thoroughly
acquit.

He made the proud Burgundians form in a ring as seemed
most fit.

The hardy Siegfried took the oath, as he his lifted hand
did show.

The mighty king at this remarked: I now most absolutely
know

That thou art free from all reproach, and so acknowledge
thee to be.

What Kriemhild hath asserted here emanated not from
thee.

Then Siegfried furthermore observed: And if to her it
seemeth good
Thy beautiful and noble wife to have so troubled in her
mood,
To me undoubtedly it will a source of pungent sorrow
be.
Thereon at one another glanced these warriors so grand
and free.

Our women nurtured so should be, Siegfried said with
sorrow stung,
That they such miserable talk would never let proceed
from tongue.
Forbid it henceforth to thy wife, and I will do the same
to mine;
Such bitterness and arrogance in truth to shame me now
incline.

By angry and resentful words have women oft divided
been.
In such deep misery and grief thereafter was Brunhilda
seen,
That she to earnest pity moved the warriors in Gunther's
pay.
Von Tronya Hagen now was seen toward the queen to
make his way.

What amiss had gone, he asked, that her he found with
troubled brow.
She told him what had taken place, and he affirmed a solemn
vow
That fair Kriemhilda's husband should endure the ex-
piating pain,
Or he himself a day of joy would never know on earth
again.

While they in conversation were came Prince Gernot and
Ortewein;
And they to counsel Siegfried's death unitedly did all com-
bine.
Just now came also Geiselher, the lovely Uta's youngest
child,
Who, understanding what was said, remarked, with true de-
votion filled:

Alas, ye honorable knights, how could you such a thing
as that?
Never, since we Siegfried knew, hath he deserved such bitter
hate
That he for anything he's done should be condemned his
life to lose.
Full many things there are indeed that woman's anger will
arouse.

Shall we the cuckoo's issue rear? said Hagen with a cruel
sting.
To swordsmen spirited as we but little honor that would
bring.
Since he has made that shameful boast against my noble
monarch's wife,
Revenge upon him will I have or sacrifice therein my
life.

At this the king himself spoke up: He nought to us hath
ever done
But for our glory and our good; henceforward then let
him alone.
Why should I against the knight encourage such a direful
hate?
To us hath he been ever true, and unconstrainedly at
that.

At this began the man from Metz, the chivalrous Sir Orte-
wein :

Scarcely his enormous strength can help him further I
opine.

If you, my lord, will but permit, I'll injure him in every
form.

Thus ready were these heroes now without a reason him to
harm.

Beyond would nobody have gone, except that Hagen in his
hate,

On all occasions suitable, would in Gunther's ears re-
peat :

If Siegfried did no longer live beneath your sway would
you receive

Full many a mighty prince's land. The monarch then be-
gan to grieve.

The matter there they let remain and went to jousting as
before ;

And oh, how many solid spears they broke before the min-
ster door,

Far as to the palace gate, in presence of King Siegfried's
wife !

And many of King Gunther's men were out of temper at
the strife.

Thereupon the monarch said : Get rid of all this deadly
scorn ;

To both our honor and our weal was the noble Siegfried
born.

He also is so great in strength, this wondrous man devoid
of fear,

If he an inkling got of this would no one dare to him draw
near.

Not so, said Hagen, you yourself unrest thereover well
may spare;
We so this matter will arrange in secrecy with every
care,
That fair Brunhilda's bitter tears to misery shall lead the
man,
And ready Hagen ever stands to do him all the harm he
can.

King Gunther thus replied to him: How can this be
brought about?
In answer spake Sir Hagen thus: That speedily shall you
find out;
Some messengers will we procure within our land to be soon
thrown,
And war upon us to declare, who should to all be quite un-
known.

You then can tell your visitors that you must go with all
your men
To hasten to the coming war. When he all this hath
taken in,
Of help will he an offer make; which signifies his loss of
life,
After I some weighty news have wheedled from the war-
rior's wife.

Sadly followed then the king his vile retainer's bad ad-
vice;
And thus began to meditate on base and treacherous arti-
fice,
Without a soul suspecting it, these warriors inured to
strife.
By wrangling of two angry dames did many a hero lose
his life.

FIFTEENTH ADVENTURE

THE BETRAYAL OF SIEGFRIED

AT fourth arrival of the sun were two and thirty men
perceived
Proceeding hither to the court. By Gunther was the news
received,
That he, the celebrated king, was threatened with repeated
strife.
The falsehood to the women caused the greatest sorrow of
their life.

The messengers permission got toward the court to per-
severe.
On their arrival they affirmed that they belonged to Ludi-
ger,
Who once completely overcome had been by Siegfried's able
hand;
And whom he had, as prisoners, conducted into Gunther's
land.

The envoys Gunther greeted well, commanding them to go
and sit.
Then one the observation made: To stand, lord king, pray
us permit,
Until we have the tidings told that we are given you to
show;
Know, then, that many a mother's son himself regardeth
as your foe.

King Ludigast will you withstand, as also will King Ludi-
ger,
On whom you, once upon a time, did injuries untold con-
fer.
With mighty armies now will they entirely overrun this
land.
King Gunther then began to storm as if he did not under-
stand.

The spurious messengers were told to certain lodgings to
repair.
How possibly could Siegfried then of such vile treachery
beware,
Or any other man indeed, so wickedly around him
spun?
Yet finally it was themselves who were distressingly un-
done.

The noble king amid his friends went softly talking up
and down,
And him Von Tronya Hagen let no sign of rest or peace
be shown.
While many servants of the king were willing the affair
to drop,
Yet did he not possess the power Sir Hagen in his scheme
to stop.

Now Siegfried, on a certain day, abruptly on them whis-
pering came;
And then to question them began the Lowlander of signal
fame:
Why is the king so sorrowful, and all who unto him be-
long?
In vengeance will I ever help if any one hath done them
wrong.

Then the monarch Gunther said: Good reason have I for
my grief;
Kings Ludigast and Ludiger threaten me with further
strife.
Their armies will they lead again hither to invade my
land.
Then said the gallant warrior: Siegfried will with able
hand,

As veneration doth exact, withstand them with his utmost
power.
I now will serve those warriors as once I treated them
before.
Their citadels will I lay waste, as also will I all their
land,
Ere I from my attempt desist; if not, my head you may
demand.

Let you and all your warriors here at home maintain your
post,
While I with my bold Nibelungs proceed against the ad-
verse host.
That I am ready you to aid I hope that you will now
believe;
From me shall all your enemies sufficient damage now
receive.

This news to me a comfort is, did then the lying monarch
add,
As if he were of Siegfried's help most earnestly and frankly
glad.
The faithless and disloyal man in perfidy then lowly
bowed,
At which the noble Siegfried said: Permit approach no
anxious cloud.

Themselves with their attending squires ready for the
march they made,
That Siegfried and his warriors they might deceive the
plan was laid.
Then ordered he to be prepared his soldiers from the
Netherland,
And they at once began to seek the weapons they would
need at hand.

The mighty Siegfried then remarked: My noble father
Siegemund,
Within this country you must stay; return we early safe
and sound,
If God that happiness permit, to see the glorious Rhine
again.
Meanwhile do you contentedly here with the king at home
remain.

They now desired to be away; the banner to the staff
was bound,
While many of King Gunther's men could wandering be
seen around,
Who ignorant entirely were wherefore they had thus been
armed.
A goodly show of men it was that Siegfried's potent cohort
formed.

Their harnesses and helmets all upon the horses did they
lade,
As then away from Gunther's land many a hardy warrior
sped.
Von Tronya Hagen thereon went whither he found Kriem-
hilda stand,
That he farewell to her might say upon departing from
the land.

How glad am I, Kriemhilda said, that I myself obtained
the man,
Who my most dear, respected friends so well defend and
shelter can,
As my good master, Siegfried here, my celebrated brother
doth.
Thereover, added now the queen, I ever must rejoice, for-
sooth.

Sir Hagen, now, my valued friend, I truly hope that you
perceive
How willing you to serve I am; I never you have tried
to grieve.
Then let me still my joy and peace in my beloved husband
keep;
May he not suffer for the harm that I to Brunhild did
so deep.

I well repented have of that, went on Kriemhilda, peni-
tent;
And also he my body hath well beaten for my punish-
ment,
For having by my foolish words afflicted Brunhild in her
mood;
He hath it thoroughly avenged, the warrior so brave and
good.

Reconciled, he thereon said, you both again will shortly
be;
And now, Kriemhilda, lady fair, will you to me benignly
say,
How to your husband now by me the best of service can be
shown;
To none would I it sooner give, and freely, queen, will it
be done.

Exempt from fear should I exist, to him replied the noble
wife,
That any one could him in strife successfully deprive of
life,
If he did not so blind pursue his confident, courageous
mood;
Immune he then would surely be, that warrior so bold and
good.

If fearful you, my lady, are, Von Tronya Hagen thereto
said,
That he can ever wounded be, then unto me do you con-
fide
By what employment or device such machinations I can
balk;
To shelter him from harm will I forever by him ride or
walk.

Thou art my kinsman, she observed, and consequently I
am thine;
Thus I to thy fidelity my consort thoroughly con-
sign,
That mayest thou for me protect that earnestly beloved
man.
Then what were better secret kept to tell him she at once
began.

My husband, she remarked, is brave, as also is he very
strong;
When he the winged serpent slew that did upon the mount
belong,
He bathed his body in the blood that he within its carcass
found.
Thereby no weapon ever made is able him in strife to
wound.

I, notwithstanding, apprehend, when he into a fight hath
gone,
And from the heroes' sturdy hands are many deadly
weapons thrown,
That I my loving husband may, by some mischance, forever
lose ;
Ah, for my dear Siegfried's sake what sorrows oft in me
repose !

And now, my highly valued friend, will I thee tell in
confidence,
That thou, of thy fidelity, may furnished be with evi-
dence,
Where my beloved husband can sore wounded be and
overthrown.
This thou now shalt understand ; in sacred faith I make
it known.

When the dragon's ghastly wound spurted forth the
heated blood
In which his body he immersed, that warrior so brave and
good,
Just then upon his shoulder fell a leaf from off a linden
tree,
And there can he a wound receive ; this fearfully doth
trouble me.

To this Von Tronya Hagen said : Let now upon his mantle
stand
For me a certain little sign, and sew it on with your
own hand ;
By this can I well recognize the spot that I must needs
protect.
She thus imagined him to save : the way to death did she
direct.

With finest silk, she answered him, will I upon his mantle
 sew
 A little crosslet secretly. And where, O hero, that shall
 show,
 Be sure my husband to protect when violent becomes the
 strife,
 And he before his enemies in stress of battle risks his
 life.

That, said Hagen, will I do, as you, fair lady, soon shall
 see.
 The good Kriemhilda thought, no doubt, that to his profit
 this would be;
 Yet by this very act of hers Kriemhilda's husband was
 betrayed.
 His leave Von Tronya Hagen took; in joy from her his
 way he made.

What he upon his visit learned his master ordered him to
 show.
 If you will change this enterprise, and let us all a-hunting
 go,
 I now have ascertained the way by which to death I can
 him bring.
 Will you give orders for the hunt? I that will do, replied
 the king.

The servant of the noble king was full of joy when this
 he knew.
 Such arrant wickedness, indeed, no warrior again will
 do,
 Until the final day hath fled, as that which now by him
 was done,
 When faithful service was from him expected by the
 beauteous queen.

Early on the following morn, with his intrepid thousand
men,
The gallant Siegfried rode away, and never merrier than
then.
He now expected to avenge the insult to his comrade's
pride.
Up near to him did Hagen ride, and his apparel closely
spied.

When he the indication saw he speedily sent back un-
seen,
Still other tidings to convey, a couple of his trusted
men,
That peaceable could still remain the whole extent of Gun-
ther's land,
As Ludiger to him had sent directly from his royal
hand.

Siegfried most unwillingly renounced the long expected
strife
Before he satisfaction had for his dear friend's vain care
and grief.
Hard it was for Gunther's men to get him now to change
his plan.
He went directly to the king who warmly him to thank
began.

Now God, Sir Siegfried, recompense your ardent zeal and
energy,
In doing with such eagerness what necessary seemed
to me.
I fully that will compensate as in all justice is your
due.
Of my esteemed and faithful friends I value none so high
as you.

As we no longer need our men in this contention forth to
 lead,
 Let us in hunting bears and swine to spend our energies
 proceed,
 Up in the grand old Odenwald, as I ere this have often
 done.
 Before had Hagen this advised, the faithless and disloyal
 man.

To all of my devoted friends this moment it announced
 shall be,
 That in the morning I will ride. Let all who wish to hunt
 with me
 Hold themselves then in readiness. And those who wish
 behind to stay
 Can with the women pass their time. Content shall I be
 either way.

With air becoming any prince the noble Siegfried thus
 replied:
 If hunting you intend to go I pleased shall be with you
 to ride.
 To me you will of course appoint a huntsman of expe-
 rience
 Attended by a few good dogs; then will I to the lindens
 hence.

Contented would you be with one? replied the noble king
 offhand;
 You four can have, if so you will, who absolutely under-
 stand
 The forest and its every path, where game in plenty makes
 its home;
 And empty-handed will you not homeward be allowed to
 come.

Then instantly unto his wife went that great warrior so
bold ;
And meantime Hagen to the king had introduced himself,
and told
How to ruin he would bring the valiant and intrepid
knight.
Of such outrageous perfidy let every man eschew the
sight.

As soon as these nefarious men to murder him had laid
the plot
Were all the rest thereof informed ; but Geiselher and brave
Gernot
Decided not to join the hunt. I know not through what
enmity
They him neglected to forewarn, but dearly for it did they
pay.

SIXTEENTH ADVENTURE

THE MURDER OF SIEGFRIED

KING GUNTHER and Sir Hagen both, high warriors
with foul designs,
Pledged themselves in treachery a hunt to hold beneath
the pines,
And with their sharpened javelins the boar to follow in
the chase,
As too the bison and the bear. What bolder deed could
one embrace?

Together with them to the sport Siegfried rode with kingly
air.
Foods of every sort and kind on their account transported
were.
There by a cool refreshing brook he afterward laid down
his life,
As wickedly had been advised by fair Brunhilda, Gunther's
wife.

Now went the hardy soldier in to where Kriemhilda he
should find.
Already packed and laden was the hunting gear of every
kind,
For him and his associates. Across the Rhine they all
were bound;
Whereat Kriemhilda never could in greater misery be
found.

His well beloved's ruby lips with kisses ardently he
pressed;
With sight of thee, dear wife, in health, God grant that I
again be blest,
And thine eyes also look on me. With joyful friends in
merry vein
Shorten thou the weary hours. I cannot now with thee
remain.

She then remembered what she'd said yet dared not men-
tion the event
Concerning which had Hagen asked. She then began to
sore lament,
This noble offspring of a king, that ever she was given
life.
Profusely then to weeping fell the hardy Siegfried's lovely
wife.

She thereon to the warrior said: Do not to hunting be
beguiled;
Last night I had a horrid dream, of how you by two
boars wild
Across the heather were pursued whereon the flowers all
were red.
A wife's excessive misery now causeth me these tears to
shed.

I cannot apprehending help some vile outrageous treach-
ery.
To this or that one has, perhaps, been done some fearful
injury,
Who could us easily pursue with bitter, unrelenting
hate.
I counsel you to stay with me, and so avoid an adverse
fate.

My love, he said, be not alarmed, I shortly shall be back
again;
I know not here of any one who grudge against me doth
retain.
All the dear, good friends of thine in like way are kind
to me;
Nor have I from these swordsmen earned any other sort
of pay.

Ah, no, beloved Siegfried, no, some grave mishap to thee
I fear.
Last night I had a fearful dream, how high above thee
did appear
Two mountains, which upon thee fell, that thee I never
saw again;
And if from me thou dost depart it home will come in
bitter pain.

His sturdy arms he threw around his lovely wife's most
virtuous form,
Held her to his loving heart and pressed her lips with kisses
warm.
He took a most affecting leave, and then he tore himself
away.
She saw him not again alive from that farewell, O sad to
say!

Away the hunting party rode within a dense and ample
wood.
In expectation of the sport; and many were the huntsmen
good.
Who there accompanied the king. Also in their midst was
stowed
An ample store of needed things to eat and drink upon
the road.

Numerous laden sumpter mules before them went across the
Rhine,
Which carried for the hunters' use a full supply of bread
and wine.
With meat and fish and other things of almost every kind
and sort,
As rich and powerful kings to have on such an expedition
ought.

A most convenient camping-ground in neighbourhood of
forests green,
Near the savage creatures' haunts, chose the mighty hunt-
ers keen,
Where able would they be to hunt upon extensive pasture
land.
Siegfried also had arrived, as did the monarch under-
stand.

By all the partners in the chase about them carefully was
set
A good lookout on every side. Then said the bold, heroic
knight,
Siegfried, full of health and strength: Who now can us
within the wood
Direct to where the game is found, ye warriors select and
good?

If we from one another part, Sir Hagen then to him
replied,
Before we enter on the chase, here within the forest
wide,
We certainly can ascertain, I and these good masters
mine,
Who the best of sportsmen is, as to the forest we in-
cline.

Let hunters all as well as dogs be separately therein
thrown,
And travel where his fancy leads let every one of us,
alone;
And whoso showeth best in chase to him let rise a thankful
song.
The huntsmen thereupon remained together not for very
long.

Then the noble Siegfried said: Of dogs I have not any
need,
Except a solitary hound of training good and gentle
breed,
To scent for me the creatures' tracks in the forest vast
and wild.
Sport in plenty we shall have, said the husband of Kriem-
hild.

Thereon an aged hunter took a broken bloodhound at his
heel,
And brought the company of lords before the time away
did steal
To where the game was plentiful; and all they started in
their way.
At once the fellow sportsmen chased, as skilful hunters do
to-day.

Whatever did the dog arouse, to that a blow with his own
hand
The hardy Siegfried quickly gave, the hero of the Nether-
land.
So great the speed of his good horse that very few could
him outrun;
And he from those who hunted there more praise than
any other won.

In every kind of exercise was he excessively
adroit.

The first of all the animals that he to speedy sure death
smote,

Was a powerful buffalo, which soon lay dead upon the
ground;

And not a long time after this the knight a savage lion
found.

When him the dog had started up he bent on him his
mighty bow,

And with a sharpened arrow hit, that skilfully he on him
drew.

The lion after he was shot three leaps essayed and noth-
ing more;

Then his companions in the chase their gratitude to Sieg-
fried bore.

A furious bison next he slew, and furthermore a monstrous
elk,

With four immense and savage bulls, besides a stag of
matchless bulk.

So swiftly carried him his horse that not a thing could
him outrun;

Alike it was with buck and doe, he took them captive one
by one.

After this a savage boar the bloodhound scented from its
lair;

As off he started on the run came swiftly as a flying
hare

This master of the hunting craft, and speedily at him took
aim;

Then in fury charged the beast upon this hero of such
fame.

Kriemhilda's husband drew his sword and through the
animal it ran,
As not another huntsman there could half so easily have
done.
When dead upon the ground it lay they fastened up the
eager hound.
The news of his abundant prey its way to the Burgundians
found.

His huntsman thereupon remarked: If it will not your
comfort thwart,
Preserve, Sir Siegfried, unto us, of all our game a little
part;
Such work as yours to-day will soon our woods and moun-
tains all exhaust.
At this remark began to laugh the hero who such deeds
could boast.

On every side the noise that rose could hardly one exag-
gerate.
The sounds from men, as well as dogs, together made a din
so great,
That over hill and linden woods the echoes of the tumult
rose.
Twice a dozen packs of hounds had by the huntsmen been
let loose.

A host of savage animals were driven to their death that
day.
Each man endeavored so to act that unto him might come
and stay
The hunter's prize for skilfulness; but that could hardly
well have been.
Then, standing by the camping fire, the hardy Siegfried
could be seen.

To hunting now a halt was called, yet was it not entirely
done ;
Within the kitchen to the fire took the hunters what they'd
won,
The skin of many an animal, and then of game a wondrous
store.
Ah, what things unto the cook the servants of the monarch
bore !

The king commanded them to tell the haughty sportsmen,
nobly born,
That he to luncheon now would go ; then lustily upon the
horn
At once the signal forth was sent, to make it known to all
around
That now the noble prince could within the camping place
be found.

Now one of Siegfried's hunters said: By signal of the
blowing horn.
Is information to us brought, that we, my lord, at once
should turn
Our steps toward the camping ground ; an answer to it I
will send.
The trumpet long for these compeers the air most lustily
did rend.

The noble Siegfried thus replied: We from the woods our
way will take.
Serenely him his horse bore off ; the others followed in his
wake.
By all the great commotion was aroused a beast of fearful
kind,
A monstrous and ferocious bear ; then shouted he to those
behind:

To us, companions of the hunt, I sport will furnish now
afresh;

A short way off I spy a bear; let slip the dog from out
the leash.

Within our camping quarters now that bear itself with us
shall show.

Escape from us he cannot make however swiftly he may
go.

Free the bloodhound then was set; the bear sprang off with
fury wild;

At once to overtake him tried the agile husband of Kriem-
hild.

He came upon a deep ravine and to the beast could not
get near;

Himself now from the hunter safe forever thought the
lusty bear.

At this alighted from his horse the gallant knight in bound-
ing haste,

And on his feet pursuit began. No shelter had the growl-
ing beast,

Nor chance of making his escape. He seized it with his
mighty hand;

Without inflicting any wound the swordsman had it quickly
bound.

Neither with his claws nor teeth could he his captor irri-
tate.

The beast he to his saddle tied and sat thereon in regal
state.

Then to the fire he carried him in frolicsome and hearty
mood

To furnish pastime for his friends, that warrior assured
and good.

Full of overbearing pride within the camping ground he
rode;

The spear was mighty that he bore, and also long and very
broad.

A richly ornamented sword which reached his spur upon
him hung;

A princely horn of ruddy gold about his person had been
slung.

Of more elaborate hunting gear I never yet informed have
been;

Of black material was the coat that on the hero's back
was seen;

His hat was made of sable's fur and rich enough for any
king;

And what superb and costly lace upon his quiver there did
cling!

A panther's fine and fleecy skin as covering for this did
show.

For its attractive odor's sake. Likewise carried he a
bow,

Such as would an engine need an arrow forth from it to
send,

Should any other than himself endeavor it alone to
bend.

With pelts of foreign animals was all the fine apparel
bound.

That from his head down to his feet was ornamented on
him found.

Upon the rider's either side, on all this glittering shaggy
fur.

Which this chief of huntsmen wore, was many a gold be-
spangled star.

The good Balmung he also wore, the massive sword so fine
in grain:

This weapon was so very sharp that nought uninjured
could remain

Were helmet by it ever struck; its cutting power indeed
was good.

The hunter, lordly and superb, sustained himself in
haughty mood.

If I to you should all they say about this noble hero
tell,

His spacious quiver, I'd relate, with useful arrows then
was full,

With ferrules all of gold composed, and iron shafts a full
hand wide:

Whatever should by one be struck not long therein did life
abide.

Then rode the noble warrior magnificently from the
wood;

When Gunther's people saw him come, as up to them he
grandly rode,

To meet him speedily they ran, in order there to hold his
horse;

And he upon his saddle bore the bear that yielded to his
force.

As he dismounted from his steed he loosened and untied
the band

From captured bruin's mouth and paws; and all the dogs
there out of hand

With vehemence began to bark when they upon the bear set
eyes.

The beast toward the wood would go; in many a man
did terror rise.

Away it through the kitchen ran as him the uproar did
inspire ;
And then how rapidly the cooks forsook their stations at
the fire !
Full many a pot was overturned, and scattered many a
burning brand,
While quantities of luscious meats were lying in the ashes
found.

Then suddenly sprang from their seats all the princes and
their men,
For signs of anger showed the bear ; the king commanded
quickly then
To loosen all the pack of hounds that side by side in leashes
lay ;
And had the matter ended well it would have been a merry
day.

With bows as well as lances sharp, without a moment's
more delay,
The expeditious hunters ran to where the bear had made
his way ;
But not a person dared to shoot for fear of slaughtering
a hound.
So great was the commotion made that loud the forest did
resound.

The bear before the pack of dogs began to fly with terror
wild,
And not a soul could follow him except the husband of
Kriemhild.
He overtook him, sword in hand, and struck the life out
of him there ;
Then once again toward the fire the servants reconveyed
the bear.

Now those who this transaction saw decided him a mighty man.

The bold companions of the chase to table all were called again;

Upon the beautiful green lawn the heroes sat, a goodly crowd;

And now what palatable joints were set before these hunters proud.

The butlers were, however, slack, and failed to bring them any wine;

But otherwise more grandly served had noble heroes never been.

Had not among them many borne within their hearts such infamy

Those warriors would all have been from blame and ignominy free.

Not the slightest consciousness had that betrayed and hardy man

That such a vile, atrocious plot against his life had there been spun.

His undefiled and virtuous heart of all deceitfulness was bare;

And some must for his death atone who profit from it did not share.

Then the noble Siegfried said: I cannot my amazement hide,

While plenty from the kitchen comes and in profusion is supplied,

Why the butlers do not bring, to wash it down, a little wine.

If thus a sportsman here is served hereafter I shall hunts decline.

I think that I have well deserved to be with more attention fed.

The king then at his table rose, and in rejoinder falsely said:

Another time will we atone for wants with which we now are cursed;

The censure must on Hagen rest, who wishes us to die of thirst.

To this Von Tronya Hagen said: My dear and most respected lord,

Methought the hunting of to-day had been, by general accord,

To Spessart, far away, assigned, and thither sent I all the wine;

Thus now is nothing here to drink; henceforward no such fault is mine.

To this the noble Siegfried said: For that I you but little thank;

Seven laden mules at least, with meat and purest wine to drink,

Should hither forwarded have been; or, if that could not be done,

We should, for hunting purposes, nearer to the Rhine have gone.

Von Tronya Hagen spake again: My noble and respected king,

A very little distance off I know a cool and pleasant spring.

That you your anger may abate I thither counsel you to go.

To many a swordsman this advice decreed infinitude of woe.

The noble Siegfried by his thirst beyond endurance was
oppressed;
At once the table to forsake he orders to his men ad-
dressed.
Off to the mountain would he go, there to seek out the
cooling brook.
The crafty counsel of the knight in confidence and truth
he took.

The animals, on wagons piled, were carted off across the
land,
That had of life been dispossessed by the noble Siegfried's
hand.
Whoever eyes upon this laid the highest praise for him
bespoke;
But Hagen with his noble guest his word of honor foully
broke.

As they were all about to start to gain the giant linden
tree,
Von Tronya Hagen thus cried out: It ever hath been said
to me,
That not a living human soul can with Kriemhilda's con-
sort hold,
When he at running sets the pace; now let us see, O
warrior bold.

Then said the noble warrior, who from the Netherlands had
gone:
That easily can you find out if any one will with me
run
As far, for wager, as the brook. If you to that are all
agreed,
Whoever then the prize shall win shall best of runners be
decreed.

Then let us see what each can do, said Hagen, the perfidious knight.

The noble Siegfried then replied: Myself I will beneath your feet,

If I shall unsuccessful prove, lay down, in truth, upon the grass.

When Gunther heard this confidence a joyful tremor felt he pass.

Then further said the warrior: Still more to you will I declare:

My weapons and my full attire will I upon my passage wear;

My javelin as well as shield, with all my heavy hunting traps.

His quiver and his trusty sword he speedily upon him clasps.

The others who with him would run the outer garments both removed;

And standing were together seen in their white shirts, as them behooved.

Like two impatient panthers wild across the clover field they ran;

The rapid Siegfried at the brook before them to arrive was seen.

The best rewards in everything from all to him were apt to glide.

He speedily threw off his sword, and then his quiver laid aside;

His massive spear for its support he leaned against the linden tree.

Beside the brooklet's limpid stream stood that guest of high degree.

The courtly breeding of a knight was then by Siegfried
fully shown.

Upon the flowing water's edge he laid his massive buckler
down;

However much by thirst oppressed, yet not a drop the
hero drank.

Until the monarch had imbibed, who him for that did
badly thank.

The water of the brook was clear, cool and good for beast
or man;

King Gunther bent his royal back and forward bowed to
where it ran;

As soon as he thereof had drunk arose again the faithless
one.

The same with pleasure later on Siegfried gladly would
have done.

He suffered for his courtesy; his sturdy bow and agile
sword

The crafty Hagen bore aside from where the hero had
them stored.

Then back again he made his way; his spear within his
hand he took,

And now upon the hero's coat he for the sign began to
look.

Just as the noble Siegfried bent to taste the water he had
found,

He sent his dagger through the cross so savagely that from
the wound

The blood an eager exit made, and over Hagen's garments
poured.

No hero to a fouler deed was ever by the devil
spurred.

The spear within his noble heart he left imbedded deep
and tight;
And then did Hagen, terror-struck, in such a hurry take
his flight
As never on this earth before had he escaped from any
man.
When Siegfried consciousness to get of his atrocious
wound began,

With fury from the brook he sprang, like any sorely
wounded deer;
Projecting from his shoulder stuck the handle of a lengthy
spear.
Could he his mighty bow or sword at that fell moment
have discerned,
Sir Hagen would indeed have had the full reward that
he had earned.

The hero, wounded unto death, discovered that his sword
was gone,
And not a thing to him was left except his massive shield
alone.
That pulling quickly from the brook he Hagen rushed
upon with might,
And him unable to escape was Gunther's mean, perfidious
knight.

Though stricken with a mortal wound so rough was his
attack and hard,
That his substantial buckler had, from off its surface, to
discard
An ample store of precious stones; the shield was nearly
broken too.
Thus gladly would the noble guest have vengeance had
upon his foe.

Sir Hagen, by that mighty hand, soon lay his length upon
the ground.

So heavy were the blows he gave the meadows echoed with
the sound.

Had only he his sword in hand he certainly had Hagen
slain;

Maddened was he by the wound, but him did anguish now
constrain.

His color grew a deathly white, not able more was he to
stand;

His body's overwhelming strength no longer was at his
command.

A signal sure of death's approach his pallid countenance
did bear;

And afterward was he bemoaned by multitudes of women
fair.

Upon the grass, among the flowers, fell the husband of
Kriemhild;

The blood that issued from his wound glided over all the
field.

Thereon began he to upbraid, impelled by his acute
distress,

Those who brought about his death by their most base
unfaithfulness.

The wounded hero then exclaimed: Woe betide you,
cowards all;

What good are all my services since now beneath your
hands I fall?

To you I ever faithful was, and must for this by death
atone;

Whereby have you to all your friends nought, alas, but
evil done.

A curse for this shall follow all, however many may be
born
To you, from this unhappy day. Your vile hostility and
scorn
Upon my conscientious life, too well, indeed, have you
enforced;
With shame from all good warriors shall you hereafter be
divorced.

Now hither hastened every knight to where he sorely
wounded lay;
To many in that company was this a sad and doleful
day.
Who truth and honor recognized lamented much the sorry
sight;
For well indeed of all deserved this able and courageous
knight.

The King of Burgundy himself much deplored the hellish
deed.
Then said to him the dying man: There is not the slightest
need
That he about the evil cry by whom the damage hath been
done;
Great dishonor hath he earned; he had it better left
alone.

Then the ruthless Hagen said: I know not what it is
you rue;
Hereby at last an end is made of all that can us trouble
brew.
From now will there be very few who us will venture to
withstand;
Glad am I his mighty sway by me at last hath seen its
end.

You easily can make your boast, said the Lowland hero,
 prone;
 If I of your bloodthirsty plot in any slight degree had
 known,
 I also fully should have known how to shield my threatened
 life.
 Now nothing troubles me on earth except Kriemhild, my
 well-loved wife.

May God upon me pity have that ever I begot a
 son,
 Who now and ever after will, of a truth, the shame have
 won,
 That any one among his kin a paltry murderer should
 live;
 Had I the opportunity of that should I with justice
 grieve.

There never yet did perpetrate so foul a slaughter any
 man,
 Unto the noble king he said, as that which you on me
 have done.
 You uninjured I have saved in times of most distressing
 need,
 And ill have you rewarded me for serving you with such
 good deed.

Still further in his anguish said this hero at the gate of
 death:
 If ever you, most noble king, upon the face of this fair
 earth
 Can true to anybody be, pray take, as I lay down my
 life,
 Into your mercy and your care, my innocent and lovely
 wife.

To her advantage let it be that she your only sister
is;
By all the virtue of a prince, help her from this grief to
rise.
A long time now for me may wait my father and my
faithful men;
Never by a cherished friend hath woman greater trouble
seen.

In bitter agony he writhed, constrained by his intense
distress,
And said, with sorrow in his heart: This murder and its
wretchedness,
In days the future has in store, may you in penitence well
rue;
For verily it seems to me that you have struck yourselves
a blow.

Wherever any one could turn wet with blood was every
flower.
He struggled with impending death, but not for long could
that endure.
For him the murderous, sharp spear too well had forced
its fatal way;
No longer could express a word this warrior as pure as
day.

When these perfidious lords had seen the hero there before
them dead,
They laid him out upon a shield whose face with purest
gold was red.
A council they began to hold concerning how they might
succeed
In fully keeping it concealed that Hagen had performed
the deed.

A number of them now remarked: A great misfortune hath
occurred;
The matter must you all conceal, and say of it with one
accord,
That as he rode to hunt alone, the worthy husband of
Kriemhild,
He was by forest thieves attacked, and in among the lindens
killed.

Thereat Von Tronya Hagen said: I will convey him to our
land.
To me it will no trouble cause if she the matter under-
stand,
Who could so thoroughly disturb the temper of our Gun-
ther's queen.
Then little shall I ask or care how she to weep and act
be seen.

About the celebrated brook where Siegfried was so foully
slain,
The truth and nothing but the truth by me before you
shall obtain.
Before the Oden forest lies a village christened Oden-
heim,
Where yet meandereth that stream, and doubtless will for
endless time.

SEVENTEENTH ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGFRIED WAS MOURNED AND BURIED

THEY waited until eventide, and then again they
crossed the Rhine;
And in a more disastrous hunt could no good heroes ever
join.
For some of their selected prey did tears from women freely
flow,
And for the blood by them poured forth must many a
knight his life forego.

Of overweening arrogance you now a narrative shall
hear,
And vengeance horrible and grim. Von Tronya Hagen
bade them bear
The murdered Siegfried's body hence, knight of the Nibel-
ungenland,
To where the queen Kriemhilda dwelt with her devoted
maiden band.

And there he ordered him to be laid secretly before the
door,
So that she surely would him find when she, as ever here-
tofore,
To-morrow went to early mass, ere had arrived the light
of day;
From which the lady Kriemhild would but very seldom stay
away.

As customary then was heard the tolling of the minster-
bell,
At which the lovely Kriemhild roused the maidens who with
her did dwell;
A light she bade them bring to her, and her attire they
also bore.
Then forward came a chamberlain, who Siegfried found
before the door.

With blood he noticed he was red, his garments also soak-
ing wet;
But that it was his master there by no means realized he
yet.
Then carried he within the room the lighted candles in
his hand;
The lady Kriemhild now from him much sad intelligence
obtained.

As she with her attendant maids toward the minster would
depart,
My lady, said the chamberlain, do not so early make a
start.
Outside before the chamber door a murdered warrior doth
lie.
O misery! Kriemhilda cried, why do you me so ter-
rify?

Ere she herself had been made sure that it was her beloved
mate,
Upon the question Hagen asked began she much to medi-
tate,
How he could him from harm protect. An omen then she
had of grief.
With his untimely sudden death all joy was gone beyond
relief.

Then down she sank upon the floor; another word spake
not the queen;
The beautiful unhappy one prone and speechless there was
seen.
Kriemhilda's lacerated heart was brimming o'er with
misery,
And after coming from her swoon the room resounded with
her cry.

Then spake her followers to her: It well a stranger yet
may be.
The blood now issued from her mouth so heartfelt was her
agony.
No, no, said she, it Siegfried is, my husband dear, without
a doubt;
Brunhilda hath the evil planned, and Hagen hath it car-
ried out.

She had herself conducted then to where they had the
hero found;
His splendid head with her white hand she lifted softly
from the ground.
All reddened as he was with blood, she knew at once her
hero grand,
As dolefully there lay the king of all the Nibel-
ungenland.

In lamentation's saddened tones cried out now the gentle
queen:
Alas the day of this great wrong! And even now thy
shield is seen
Without a mark of foeman's sword; thou fell'st by an
assassin's hand.
If I but knew who this hath done revenge would ever I
demand.

The whole of her vast retinue lamented much and cried
aloud
With their beloved sovereign. In misery their heads they
bowed,
For their devoted lord and king, who there before them lay
forlorn.
Most cruelly had Hagen thus avenged Brunhilda's rage and
scorn.

The fair unfortunate then said: Let some one now with
swiftness run,
And waken in the greatest haste the noble Siegfried's
gallant men;
He also shall to Siegmund tell the grievance under which
I groan,
That he may hither come and help the valiant Siegfried to
bemoan.

Then ran a messenger at once to where he in their slumber
found
The heroes who with Siegfried came from out the Nibel-
ungenland.
All joy away from them he took when he had brought
them this sad word.
Indeed, they would it not believe till they the lamentations
heard.

Then also came the messenger to where the king himself
reposed;
But Siegmund, that most mighty lord, his wakeful eye-
lids had not closed,
As if the recent happenings had been engraved upon his
brain,
That he his cherished only son should never living see
again.

King Siegmund, rouse thyself at once; to summon thee me sternly bade
Kriemhilda, my respected queen, to whom hath come a grief most sad,
That more than any other loss may well afflict her lonely heart.
This thou wilt help her to bemoan, for by it thou wilt also smart.

Up hastily King Siegmund sprang. What hath taken place to pain
The beautiful Kriemhilda's heart that you would now to me explain?
With tears the messenger replied: She reason hath indeed to mourn;
Brave Siegfried of the Netherlands hath of his precious life been shorn.

Thereon King Siegmund quickly said: With jesting instantly be done
About such miserable news respecting my beloved son;
And unto no one say again that he by any hath been killed;
With bitterness my heart would be until my end completely filled.

If you have not full confidence in what you now have heard me say,
Then come at once yourself and hear Kriemhilda's accents of dismay,
And those of all her retinue, because of noble Siegfried's death.
How terrified was Siegmund then! With pain he nearly lost his breath.

Then bounded he from off his bed, and all his men, a hundred strong;
They grappled in their sturdy hands their trusty weapons sharp and long,
And hurried off toward the place from which proceeded cries of pain.
A thousand warriors also came of gallant Siegfried's chosen men.

When they the lamentations heard of these poor women so distressed,
Then first to them remembrance came that fittingly were they not dressed.
Before their misery and pain their reason had them partly left;
A weighty load of grief there lay buried in those hearts bereft.

At last the noble Siegmund came to where he saw Kriemhilda stand.
The journey cursed be, said he, that we have made into this land!
Who now has you of your good knight, and me of my beloved child,
So murderously now deprived, since those about us friends are styled?

Indeed, if him I only knew, replied the sorrow-stricken queen,
No tenderness on his account would ever in my heart be seen.
Such ills for him would I contrive that every friend on earth he had
By me would surely be compelled through deep affliction's tide to wade.

Within his arms King Siegmund took the lifeless body of his son.

From all his followers then became so piercing loud affliction's tone,

That from the lamentation there, throughout the palace and the hall,

And all the ample fort of Worms, the echoes of the shrieks did fall.

To Siegfried's widow no one could aught of aid or comfort give.

His handsome body they began from all its clothing to relieve.

The wounds examined were and washed, and he was laid upon a bier.

His people suffered cruelly in unconsolable despair.

Then said his sturdy warriors who came from Nibelung-
enland:

Now him to thoroughly avenge may ever ready be our hand;

The man within this palace dwells by whom the dastard deed was done.

To arm themselves in haste began those warriors of Siegfried's own.

This well-selected band of men came every one behind his shield,

Eleven hundred warring knights, of whom the chief command did wield

King Siegmund of the Netherlands. The death of his beloved son

Would he too gladly have avenged, as honor told him should be done.

They were, however, not aware on whom their vengeance
dure to wreak,
Unless it noble Gunther was, and those whose service he
bespake,
And who with Siegfried to the hunt had ridden that ill-
fated day.
Kriemhilda now beheld them armed, which bred in her a
fresh dismay.

However great might be her grief, however exquisite her
pain,
Yet so severely did she dread lest Nibelungen knights be
slain
By her own brothers' warriors, that she against this spake
also,
Rebuking them in loving words, as friend to friends may
always do.

My lord, King Siegmund, she observed, full of misery and
care,
What would you now attempt to do? You surely cannot
be aware
Of all the brave and hardy men King Gunther hath behind
his back:
Destroyed will you be, every one, if you those warriors
attack.

With elevated bucklers they all eager for the conflict
stood.
The noble and unhappy queen entreated every way she
could,
These bold, intrepid warriors from such a project to for-
bear.
That they would not abandon it filled her with excess of
care.

My lord, King Siegmund, she remarked, pray let the matter
quiet lie
Till a more fitting time shall be. My noble husband then
will I
Assist you ever to avenge. The one who him hath torn
from me,
When who it is I've ascertained, shall suffer for it
bitterly.

So many overweening men may here upon the Rhine
arise,
That you to enter now on strife can I most surely not
advise.
For every thirty men of theirs can you supply not more
than one.
May God them in like way reward for what they unto us
have done.

Continue here within the house and bear with me this
awful grief,
Till daylight shall begin to show, ye heroes anxious for
relief;
And my beloved husband then within his coffin help to
lay.
The soldiers unto her replied: We will, dear lady, you
obey.

No one could upon the earth the wonders all to you re-
late
Of these unhappy knights and dames, how they were heard
bemoan their fate,
Until the echoing thereof could in the city be per-
ceived.
Then came the noble burgesses hurriedly to those be-
reaved.

They sorrowed with the visitors their great affliction to be-
moan.

What Siegfried had been guilty of to them was utterly
unknown,

For which the noble warrior had been condemned to lose
his life.

Then with the dolful women wept many a worthy towns-
man's wife.

The smiths were bidden come in haste a shell for him to
fabricate

Of silver intermixed with gold, of great solidity and
weight,

And have it thoroughly encased with layers of the finest
steel.

Then all the people in their hearts the utmost tenderness
did feel.

The night at last had taken flight, reported was the morn-
ing dawn.

Commanded then the noble queen within the minster to
be borne

The body of the noble dead, her murdered and beloved
one.

With her attended, full of tears, all the friends that she
had won.

When she toward the minster came, how many bells gave
out their clang!

On every side were clearly heard the priests as they the
service sang.

Then the monarch Gunther came and all his men in great
display,

With whom the ruthless Hagen was, who better far had
stayed away.

Dear sister, said the noble king, O woe upon thy
misery!

Alas, that we could not have been from such a misad-
venture free.

For our devoted Siegfried's death must we eternally
lament.

In that you show yourself most false, the wife in sorrow
did resent.

If you had much regretted it this never would have taken
place.

You fully had forgotten me, that must I utter to your
face,

When I thus separated was from my own best beloved
one.

Would to God in heaven above that unto me it had been
done!

They held together in their lies. Thereat Kriemhilda did
commence:

Who wishes guiltless to appear he soon can show his inno-
cence.

He needeth only to the bier before the people here to
go,

And then to us, upon the spot the truth he speedily can
show.

A miracle indeed it seems, yet one that often taketh
place,

That if a murderer be seen the victim of his crime to
face,

The wounds begin afresh to bleed; and here indeed it so
fell out.

Thereby was this atrocious crime to Hagen traced without
a doubt.

The blood anew began to flow as freely as it had
before,
And all who heavily bemoaned now fell to weeping even
more.

King Gunther thereupon remarked: Now listen to the real
truth;

By robbers was the hero slain, and Hagen did it not, for-
sooth.

These robbers unto me, she said, most unmistakably are
known;

And by his noble kinsmen's hands may God this infamy
atone.

Gunther and Hagen are indeed those by whom was done
the deed.

Then Siegfried's irritated men to battle would again pro-
ceed.

But unto them Kriemhilda said: Endure with me my bitter
woe.

Then to where the dead reposed did her two loving brothers
go,

The melancholy prince Gernot, accompanied by Geisel-
her.

In honesty bemoaned they him, their eyes bedimmed with
many a tear.

Kriemhilda's husband they bewailed with sorrowful and
heavy hearts.

But now was time the mass to sing, so to the minster from
all parts

Were men and women to be seen thronging to that building
blest;

Those even who him little missed mingled weeping with the
rest.

Then said Gernot and Geiselher: Dear sister of us princes
three,
Thyself now solace for the dead, since otherwise it cannot
be;
To thee will we it compensate so long as ever we may
live.
Yet knew not one upon the earth how consolation her to
give.

The coffin now was all prepared, about the middle of the
day;
Then lifted was he from the bier whereon in silent death
he lay.
The queen, however, not as yet could give consent to bury
him;
And this to everybody there much trouble gave and labor
grim.

In clothes of rich material the body of the dead was
wound.
It certain is that no one there without a tearful eye was
found.
At bottom of her saddened heart the noble Uta felt re-
morse,
And also all her retinue, over Siegfried's gallant
corse.

Now when the tidings went abroad that mass was in the
minster sung,
And that the knight encoffined was, the crowd in numbers
thither strung.
In his immortal soul's behalf what offerings the people
gave!
For even there among his foes he many trusty friends did
have.

Herewith unto her chamberlains the sorrowful Kriemhilda
said:

For all the love you bear to me, will you this labor under-
take?

To those who wish him happiness, and faithful unto me
now hold,

For benefit of Siegfried's soul distribute equally his
gold.

No child so little could be seen who had but reason grown
to have,

But went to make an offering ere he was placed within
the grave.

A hundred masses certainly did every day ascend in
song.

Of Siegfried's uncorrupted friends assembled there a
mighty throng.

When all the chanting came to end the people rose and
went away.

Kriemhilda further then implored: O leave me not alone,
I pray,

Nor let me solitary watch my valiant warrior to-
night.

With his fair body in that chest lies every joy and pure
delight.

For three unbroken days and nights will I my vigil here
maintain,

Till I myself have satisfied with my beloved murdered
one.

The will of God perhaps may be that to me death shall
come also,

And this would be a joyful end for poor Kriemhilda's
bitter woe.

The folk belonging to the town back to the dwellings went
again,
But every priest and every monk awhile she ordered to
remain,
And also all her retinue, with her to watch the dead and
pray.
In tedium the nights they passed, in painful labor every
day.

Fasting, without meat or drink many a man did there
remain.
The news, however, was conveyed to those unwilling to
abstain,
That all they wanted could be had; King Siegmund had
adjusted that.
Of all the Nibelungen knights was heavy care and toil the
fate.

Within the space of these three days, as we repeatedly
have heard,
Had with the sorrowing Kriemhild much work and trouble
to be shared
By those who tunefully could sing. And then what offer-
ings they bore!
For even those who had been poor had riches now enough
in store.

Whenever any poor were found who nought to offer could
provide,
She had them make their offerings in gold that was to
them supplied
Out of Siegfried's private funds. As he in life no more
abode,
For his immortal soul's repose were many thousand marks
bestowed.

Possessions vast and revenues divided they throughout the
land
To every one in convent found, and all the holy men at
hand.
Of silver and apparel, too, abundance to the poor they
gave.
She let it be distinctly seen how she was his devoted
slave.

At morning of the third sad day, precisely at the hour
of mass,
Was seen the great necropolis, that by the minster had its
place,
Of weeping folk from field and farm to be to utmost limit
full,
To show allegiance to the dead, as from his friends was
dutiful.

In these four days that followed close, so the tale to us
has come,
Fully thirty thousand marks, perchance it was a larger
sum,
To bring salvation to his soul, were given to the poor's
relief.
Meanwhile had vanished wholly his great beauty as his
life.

As in the service of the church the sound of singing died
away,
So could the unrestricted grief of all the crowd no one
allay.
From under the cathedral roof he then was carried to the
grave,
And now was nothing to be heard except of tears and
groans a wave.

The people with depressing cries in long procession came behind.

No happy soul could there be found of either man or womankind.

Before he rested in his grave the services were sung and read.

And what a number of good priests were at this burial of the dead!

Before Kriemhilda had arrived at her lamented husband's grave,

Over noble Siegfried's corpse so overcome was she with grief,

That with the water from the brook they often thoroughly her wet;

The sorrow of her broken heart was then beyond expression great.

A marvel in reality it was that she remained in life.

Many a worthy woman there helped her to give voice to grief.

You, my noble Siegfried's men, said most mournfully the queen,

Accord to me a kindness great out of your compassion keen.

After the sorrow I endure grant me but the smallest grace,

And me allow just once again to look upon his handsome face.

In her absorbing misery she begged so constantly and long,

That broken open was at last that beautiful, forged coffin strong.

After that the queen was led to where he in his casket
lay.
She lifted up his comely head with her white hand right
tenderly,
And planted kisses on the lips of that bold warrior and
good;
In misery her shining eyes abundantly shed tears of
blood.

A harrowing adieu it was as ever seen at any
hour.
Away she then was carried hence, for she to walk had not
the power.
Without a sign of consciousness the noble woman long did
lie;
From her inordinate despair she seemed as if about to
die.

When this most noble warrior thus placed within the earth
had been,
In utter grief and bitterness the heroes everywhere were
seen,
Who him had here accompanied from out the Nibel-
ungenland.
But seldom ever after that was Siegmund happy to be
found.

Many there among them were who for the space of three
full days,
Because of their great misery, did neither thirst nor hunger
ease;
But longer able were they not their bodies' needs to quite
forget.
Their sorrows they recovered from, as many another doeth
yet.

Kriemhild, bereft of every sense, in a deep swoon unconscious lay

For all that day and evening, indeed until the following day.

Whatever any one might say to her was utterly unknown.

And also did King Siegmund lie equally with reason flown.

Intelligence to bring to him they barely able were at length,

For utterly exhausted was, by deep affliction, all his strength;

Which verily no wonder was. His men remarked in tones sincere:

Let us now homeward wend our way, no longer we can bear it here.

EIGHTEENTH ADVENTURE

HOW SIEGMUND RETURNED HOME AND KRIEMHILD
REMAINED BEHIND

THE father of Kriemhilda's dead to her advanced with
 outstretched hand,
And to the noble queen remarked: Let us return into our
 land;
Our welcome we have well worn out, methinks, now here
 upon the Rhine.
So come, dear daughter, home with us to hold the country
 that is mine.

Since we in this accursed land deprived are thus compelled
 to be
Of your beloved husband's form by vile and dastard
 treachery,
On you shall vengeance not be had. With pity for you I
 am filled,
Through love of my devoted son and your exalted infant
 child.

My lady, you shall also there with fullest power take com-
 mand
That Siegfried had on you bestowed, the warrior so bold
 and grand.
The land entire as well as crown shall ever at your service
 be,
And all of Siegfried's trusty men will you be ready to
 obey.

The servants duly were informed that they must go before
the night;

In hurried preparation then the horses soon were brought
in sight.

With these detested enemies a torment now it was to
live.

For women fair, as well as maids, to seek attire do all now
strive.

When ready now King Siegmund was toward his home to
ride away,

Kriemhilda's mother came to her and pleaded with her
earnestly,

That she should with her relatives in her own country yet
remain.

The joyless woman then replied: I hardly that can en-
tertain.

However could my tearful eyes the sight of that one man
endure,

Who unto me, poor woman, did this great calamity se-
cure?

Then said the youthful Geiselher: Dearly beloved sister
mine,

You should, for your maternal love, with your dear mother
here remain.

Of all who to distress your heart and vex your spirit did
presume

You have no need of services, my property you can con-
sume.

She then responded to the prince: How possibly can that
take place?

I verily should die of grief had I to look on Hagen's
face.

All that will I for you prevent, my dearest sister, you shall
see ;
With your true brother Geiselher here forever you shall
be,
And I to you will make amends for Siegfried's death by
every deed.
Then said again the joyless queen: That would be sad
Kriemhilda's need.

As her young brother unto her his earnest pleadings did
outpour,
Queen Uta and her son Gernot began her also to im-
plore,
And all of her devoted friends, that she would there remain
behind ;
Among the whole of Siegfried's men few kinsmen would
she ever find.

Strangers are they all to you, replied to her the brave
Gernot ;
However mighty one may be, with death resistance goes for
nought ;
My sister, well consider that, and comfort take unto your
heart.
Remain with your own kinsmen here, that is by far the
better part.

She to her brother then engaged within his country to re-
main.
At this were led the horses up for Siegmund's servitors and
men,
Who anxious were at once to go toward the Nibelungen-
land.
Well laden for the warriors, too, was all they needed at
their hand.

Thereupon King Siegmund went before Kriemhilda's face
to stand;
And to the lady he remarked: The men of Siegfried's own
command
Are waiting with the steeds below. To leave directly is our
aim;
For I in most unwilling mood to stay with these Burgun-
dians am.

The Lady Kriemhild thus replied: My kinsmen now have
counselled me,
The wisest friends that I possess, that here my residence
should be.
Blood relations have I none within the Nibelungen-
land.
To Siegmund it a sorrow was to find Kriemhilda thus to
stand.

Thereto King Siegmund thus replied: Let that be said to
you by none.
Before all kinsmen I possess shall you control the land and
crown,
With all the appertaining power, as heretofore you well
have done.
None shall e'er on you avenge the loss of my beloved
son.

Go with us now toward our home for your unhappy in-
fant's sake;
Remain not here behind and thus doubly him an orphan
make.
When he to manhood doth arrive he'll be to you a solace
bright;
Meanwhile at your command will be many a brave intrepid
knight.

My good Lord Siegmund, she replied, I cannot with you go
away.

To tarry here am I compelled, whatever to me happen
may,

With my devoted relatives, who me will comfort when I
grieve.

These tidings did those warriors with displeasure now re-
ceive.

With one consent they all exclaimed: By this we must with
freedom own,

That not until this dismal hour have we misfortune ever
known.

If in this country you decide with our much-hated foes to
stay,

Then never yet did sadder knights upon a journey start
away.

Fearlessly, my friends, depart, and God will keep you in
his care.

A proper escort you shall have who will your every danger
share

Until you at your land arrive. My beloved infant
son

Will you, my warriors, protect, in memory of him that's
gone.

When finally they clearly saw that she with them would
not depart,

Then began Lord Siegfried's men each to weep with heavy
heart.

In sorrow fully as acute thereafter did King Siegmund
take

A sober leave of Queen Kriemhild. He sore lamented for
her sake.

A curse upon this festival, muttered the despondent
king;
To any monarch and his friends can never more a pastime
bring
A more lamentable result than that which we have suffered
here.
Never more to Burgundy shall we our wretched footsteps
steer.

Then openly replied the knights who unto Siegfried did
pertain:
It possibly may come to pass that we this way may come
again,
If we can only find the man who our good master foully
slew;
Deadly enemies enough among his friends they then would
view.

The king Kriemhilda then embraced, and said to her in
grievous pain,
When her he so determined saw at home without him to re-
main:
As joylessly we ride away to seek again our native
land,
The full extent of my despair I first do fully compre-
hend.

Forthwith they unattended rode away from Worms upon
the Rhine;
They well might fully be convinced, and easy rest within
the mind,
That ever if in enmity should any one them dare at-
tack,
The lusty Nibelungen hands would drive their foemen
quickly back.

Before the time of setting out no taking leave did intervene;
The brave Gernot and Geiselher with friendly aspect both were seen
To come toward the noble king; his sore affliction did them grieve,
And this they let him plainly see, the heroes dignified and brave.

Then said with royal courtesy the brave and noble Prince Gernot:
As to the noble Siegfried's death doth God in heaven fully know
That I entirely guiltless am. I never even heard one say
Who here unfriendly to him were. Him mourn with reason then I may.

A fitting escort then him gave the young and handsome Geiselher.
He brought, without an incident, save such as sorrow did confer,
The king and all his warriors again within the Netherlands.
How few among his relatives they joyous found within those lands!

Of what concerned them afterward I plainly nothing can declare.
But here was Queen Kriemhilda heard to ever mourn in her despair.
No one there could her console, in her sad heart and sober mood,
Except her brother Geiselher, and he to her was true and good.

The beautiful Brunhilda nursed her arrogance and pride throughout.

How grievously Kriemhilda wept, what cared she to inquire about!

And nevermore did she to her fidelity or love display.

But later on Kriemhilda brought to her much sorrow and dismay.

NINETEENTH ADVENTURE

HOW THE TREASURE OF THE NIBELUNGS WAS CARRIED
TO WORMS

WHEN the noble Kriemhild thus widowed was in life
and heart,
Remained beside her in the land the gallant margrave
Eckewart,
With all his hardy warriors, as true allegiance him re-
quired.
He zealously his mistress served until his own sad death
occurred.

By the minster's side at Worms apartments were to her
assigned,
Within whose wide and roomy space richness and comfort
were combined.
Herein with her large retinue the joyless woman mostly
sat,
And often visited the church; with great devotion did she
that.

To where her husband buried lay she went with utmost
diligence;
Thither went she day by day, with wounded soul and in-
jured sense,
And there she prayed almighty God his soul into His care
to take.
Her noble hero she bemoaned; her loyalty could nothing
shake.

Dame Uta and her retinue tried oft to interest her
mind,
But in her weary, wounded heart she little peace could ever
find.
The consolation did no good that constantly to her they
turned;
For her beloved absent friend in misery she ever
yearned.

Some hero doth each woman have whom she hath ever
canonized.
The strength of her fidelity herein could well be recog-
nized,
That she for him did truly mourn till she herself was called
to die.
And even in her fierce revenge she showed her perfect
loyalty.

In tribulation there she sat, and this to be quite true is
known,
After she her husband lost, until beyond three years had
flown,
In which to Gunther not a word by her had ever spoken
been;
And Hagen, her relentless foe, in all that time she had not
seen.

Von Tronya Hagen now spake forth: If only it were
brought about,
That you your sister's tenderness again could ardently call
out,
Then into your domain would come the Nibelungen store
of gold;
Whereby immensely you would gain if us the queen in
love did hold.

We can but try if such may be, replied the royal
murderer ;
For this together shall entreat the lords Gernot and Geisel-
her,
Until they manage to succeed in making her this gladly
see.
I do not think, said Hagen then, that such result will ever
be.

Then bade he Ortwein of Metz to be by him at court re-
ceived,
The margrave Garie with him too, and having fully this
achieved,
Gernot was also there conveyed, together with young Geisel-
her,
Who unto Queen Kriemhilda played the part of friendly
messenger.

Gernot, the bold Burgundian, said to her when he had
come :
My lady, you bewail too long the noble Siegfried's doleful
doom.
The king is anxious you to show that he your husband did
not slay.
In every quarter it is heard that you bemoan him griev-
ously.

No one, she said, accuses him, for he was slain by Hagen's
hand.
The spot where he could wounded be allowed I him to un-
derstand.
How was I to be aware that Hagen bore to him such
hate?
Had I known anything of it I could have kept him from
his fate,

And not his body beautiful so thoughtlessly have then
betrayed ;

So now my tears must ever flow that I myself did thus
degrade.

I nevermore can friendly be to those who this to him have
done.

Then Geiselher began to urge, the valiant and intrepid
man.

I must him now salute, she said, since you the matter so
do urge ;

But you in this are much to blame, for Gunther hath me
to the verge

Of sense-destroying sorrow led, free from any fault of
mine.

My mouth forgiveness may him grant, my heart must ever
so decline.

Hereafter better it will be, remarked her kinsmen then,
apart ;

For possibly he may succeed in quieting her troubled
heart.

He yet may make to her amends, interrupted then Ger-
not ;

The sorrow-laden woman said: To do thy bidding I am
brought.

The noble king will I receive. When thus he had the
queen's consent,

With his most highly valued friends the monarch to his
sister went.

But Hagen trusted not himself into her presence yet to
come ;

He knew his great iniquity, aware that he had done her
harm.

As she was willing to forget to Gunther her long-cherished
hate,
That he his sister should embrace appeared to him to well
befit.
If she with his conniving will had not within such ill been
drawn,
Then with courageous mien could he into her presence oft
have gone.

With such a flow of woeful tears was reconciliation
late
Between friends parted never made. Her injuries were very
great,
Yet everything did she forgive to all of them excepting
one,
For surely none would him have slain if Hagen had the
deed not done.

Now only shortly afterward were things by them so well
arranged,
That this fair daughter of a king the unrestricted hoard
obtained
From out the Nibelungenland, and had it carried to the
Rhine.
Her nuptial morning gift it was, and therefore hers by
right divine.

In consequence to fetch it went young Geiselher and brave
Gernot.
Eight thousand of her hardy men Queen Kriemhild or-
dered to the spot,
To bring it all away to her from where it safely hidden
lay,
Protected well by Alberich and all the men beneath his
sway.

When they, because of this vast store, were seen advancing
from the Rhine,
The bold and dauntless Alberich said to his companions
fine:
With reason can we longer not the treasure keep from her
esquires,
Since as her nuptial morning gift the noble queen it now
desires.

However, Alberich further said, it would not so have been
contrived,
If we had not unhappily been thus by treachery de-
prived
Of our obscuring mystic cloak, and Siegfried also foully
killed;
For on him it he always bore, the consort of the fair Kriem-
hild.

But now unfortunate, alas, for Siegfried hath it come to
pass,
That ever the tarnkappe took the hero from its resting-
place,
And that to him this country must be ever in allegiance
bound.
Then went the chamberlain within to where the key was
lying found.

Now there before the mountain stood Kriemhilda's men in
good array,
And many of her kinsmen too. The treasure then without
delay
They had transported to the sea, and in the vessels did
confine,
And bore it off upon the waves from that high mountain
to the Rhine.

Now listen to the wondrous things that of this treasure
can be said.

In twelve capacious wagons could it hardly thence be well
conveyed

Out of the mountain's vaulted pit, if four full days and
nights be had,

If even thrice on every day the journey to and fro were
made.

Therein were only to be seen costly precious stones and
gold.

And if one bought the world entire from this vast treasure
yet untold,

Still would it by a single mark not diminished have been
found.

The wary Hagen had indeed not wanted it without good
ground.

Among them lay the wishing-rod, a little golden magic
wand,

The which, if one should fathom it, would give him abso-
lute command,

Without excepting even one, of every man upon the
earth.

From Alberich, with brave Gernot, went many a friend of
solid worth.

Now when the warrior Gernot and his good brother Geisel-
her

Possession got of this vast hoard, each one of them became
master

Of all the castles and the land, and many a dauntless
warrior.

These to serve them were compelled at once by fear and
mighty power.

When they the treasure had transferred within the noble
Gunther's land,
And of it had the lovely queen assumed the paramount
command,
Extensive chambers and high towers were filled as full as
they could hold ;
Never of such riches vast have greater miracles been
told.

But had the treasure been indeed a thousandfold still
greater found,
Yet if the noble Siegfried could have risen to her safe and
sound,
Kriemhilda willingly with him without a mark had linked
her fate.
Not ever to a hero was a woman's faithfulness so
great.

As she the treasure had obtained, so she allured within the
land
A host of foreign warriors. So freely gave her queenly
hand
That liberality as great had no one ever before
seen.
Exalted virtues practised she, that truly can one say, I
ween.

To rich as well as to the poor so freely she began to
give,
That Hagen said unto the king: If she a little longer
live,
And be allowed to so proceed, she will into her service
bring
So many foreign warriors that unto us much harm will
cling.

King Gunther unto him replied: The property belongs to her;
How shall I then interfere with how she doth it minister?
I hardly managed to effect that she would me in pardon hold;
And I shall never dare to ask how she divides her gems and gold.

Then Hagen answered to the king: A man of wisdom would entrust
A precious treasure such as this to no weak woman to adjust.
With her excessive largesses she yet will furnish such a day
That very grievously regret the mettlesome Burgundians may.

Responded Gunther in his turn: A solemn oath to her I gave,
That never once again by me should she a cause of sorrow have,
And this in future I shall keep; my sister, bear in mind, is she.
To this the wily Hagen said: Let me the guilty actor be.

But little venerated they their guarantees and plighted word;
The widow ruthlessly they robbed of all that overwhelming hoard;
For Hagen now of all the keys possession got within his hand.
Her brother Gernot furious was on finding how did matters stand.

Then said the youthful Geiselher: A grievous injury is
wrought
By Hagen to my sister here, which firmly to oppose I
ought.
If he to me were not of kin the recompense should be his
life.
Anew with energy to weep began the noble Siegfried's
wife.

Then said the worthy King Gernot: Ere we such punish-
ment and pain
Shall suffer by this heap of gold, will we within the river
Rhine
It all have sunken out of sight; to no one then will it
belong.
Then Kriemhild went to Geiselher, bemoaning this enor-
mous wrong.

Dear brother, she complained to him, do not, I pray,
abandon me;
Of life as well as property must thou for me the guardian
be.
To her he then responded thus: It certainly shall fall out
so,
When we again this country reach. Upon a journey now
we go.

King Gunther and his noble friends made their exit from
the land,
The very highest of them all that possibly could there be
found.
And Hagen only there remained, to nurse the unrelenting
hate
That he toward Kriemhilda bore, and harm to her to per-
petrate.

Or ever had the mighty king again within the land ar-
rived,
Meanwhile the crafty Hagen had the treasure all to seize
contrived;
And had the whole at fair Lochheim deposited within the
Rhine.
Alone he thought it to enjoy, but unfulfilled was that de-
sign.

Before Von Tronya Hagen had the treasure thus put out
of sight,
Together solemnly they swore and sacredly their word did
plight
That hidden ever it should lie so long as either one might
live;
Whereby they neither to themselves nor any other could
it give.

In time the princes came again, and with them many a
hardy man.
Kriemhilda of her injuries then loudly to complain be-
gan,
With maidens young and matrons both; their misery indeed
was great.
Those warriors affected then upon his death to contem-
plate.

They said with unanimity: By her hath he unjustly
done.
Till he in friendship had again the princes to his favor
won
From their resentment he recoiled. Unpunished then they
let him go;
But Kriemhild could not well to him a more embittered
hatred show.

With all of these new grievances the burden of her heart
was great;
At first because of Siegfried's death, and now because her
whole estate
From her entirely was purloined. Her wailing she did not
allay,
So long as she existence had, not ever till her final
day.

After the noble Siegfried's death, as well is worthy of
belief,
For thirteen long and weary years existed she absorbed in
grief.
Her hero's melancholy death could she an instant not for-
get;
To him she ever faithful was, and famed for that through-
out the land.

A princely abbey, rich and grand, Dame Uta founded and
endowed,
Soon after Dankrat had expired, from her own property
bestowed,
With great and goodly revenues, that it enjoys unto this
day.
At Rhenish Lorsch the convent is, and in high honor doth it
stay.

To this Kriemhilda also gave no mean a portion after-
ward,
On account of Siegfried's soul, and every other soul to
guard,
In ruddy gold and precious stones, with willing and un-
stinted hand.
A truer wife upon this earth not oft attention doth com-
mand.

Since Queen Kriemhilda favor had again toward King
Gunther shown,
And afterward her treasure had lost by trespass of his
own,
Thereby increased so much the more the misery of her poor
heart ;
And willingly the noble dame from there would speedily
depart.

For Lady Uta at this time erected was a widow's
seat,
Beside the priory at Lorsch, very stately, rich, and
great.
From all her children she withdrew, and an asylum here
secured.
And here within a coffin yet the noble queen remains im-
mured.

The widowed queen to Kriemhild said: My dearest daugh-
ter, as I see
That you no longer here can stay, come and spend your
days with me,
In my secluded home at Lorsch. No longer then need you
to grieve.
To her Kriemhilda answered thus: Where then shall I my
husband leave?

Here let him in repose remain, replied Dame Uta, slow and
mild.
May God in heaven that prevent, replied her adoring
child.
No, no, beloved mother mine, I never such a thing could
do ;
My dearest also must from here ; he shall indeed with me
now go.

Then had that woman sorrowful her husband taken from
his grave;
And his most noble, hallowed bones another burial did
have,
Beside the minster down at Lorsch, with honors great and
manifold.
There within a coffin great lieth still that hero
bold.

But when the moment had arrived that beautiful Kriem-
hilda should
With her good mother thither go, where willingly indeed
she would,
Was she behind compelled to stay and quite abandon her
design,
Because of tidings she received from far away beyond the
Rhine.

TWENTIETH ADVENTURE

THE WOOING OF KRIEMHILDA AT WORMS BY KING ETZEL

ABOUT the time now spoken of, King Etzel's wife,
Queen Helka, died;
Whereat the royal monarch sad another consort would provide.
To him commended then his friends, across the sea in Burgundy,
The widow of a noble prince, whose name, Kriemhilda,
known would be.

Since he had now no loving queen, the charming Helka
having died,
If you now meditate, they said, on gaining soon a noble
bride,
The most exalted and the best that ever yet a prince hath
gained,
Kriemhilda is the one to take, whom Siegfried formerly
obtained.

To this the mighty king replied: Pray how can that be
brought about?
You know that I a heathen am, who have baptism gone
without,
While she a zealous Christian is, who never here would
make her home.
A wonder it might well be called if hither she should ever
come.

The sprightly courtiers replied: Perhaps she such a thing
might do
Because of your exalted name, and all the riches you
can show.
A trial could at least be made in person with the lovely
dame;
In you most fitting it would be her lovely form as yours
to claim.

The noble monarch then inquired: In whom among you
can be found
A knowledge of the river Rhine, the people there as well
as land?
Then from Bechlaren made reply the noble margrave
Rudiger:
To me are known from infancy those most exalted sover-
eigns there.

The monarchs Gunther and Gernot, of chivalry the flower
both,
The other's name is Geiselher; and each of these un-
changing doth,
In full accord with equity, what best he can both good
and great.
And also of their ancestors can I the same thing truly
state.

To him again King Etzel said: Inform me now, my
noble friend,
Would it then fitting be that she upon my throne should
here ascend?
If she have beauty so extreme, as say the tidings we
receive,
The very best among my friends can nothing have thereat
to grieve.

The beauty of her lovely face resembles that of my fair
dame,
Queen Helka, my devoted spouse; more beautiful you
could not name,
Upon the whole of this wide earth, a soul to take a queenly
part.
The one whom she selects as friend may well take solace
to his heart.

So woo her, Rudiger, he said, as thou dost love and
honor me;
And if I to the fair Kriemhild shall ever joined in wed-
lock be,
I thee will thoroughly reward, by any means that can be
brought;
For thou wilt then my urgent wish most faithfully have
carried out.

From my extensive treasury so much to thee I'll have them
give,
That thou and all thou holdest dear in peace may ever
after live.
Of horses and of fine attire, whatever thou wouldst have
in hand,
To carry on thy embassy, shall plenty be at thy com-
mand.

The noble margrave, Rudiger, for answer to the monarch
said:
Desired I of your wealth to have, in honor's path should
I not tread.
With pleasure as your messenger will I away toward the
Rhine,
At charge of my own property; from you receive I all
that's mine.

The mighty monarch then replied: How soon dost think
to be away
Toward the love-inspiring dame? May God his grace to
thee display,
By keeping thee from every harm, as also her my longed-
for love;
And may the fates the favor grant that she accessible
shall prove.

Then answered Rudiger again: Before we from this land
can fare,
It necessary is for us both arms and raiment to pre-
pare;
That when before the queen we come we may with honor
her salute.
Toward the Rhine shall I conduct five hundred swordsmen
of repute.

That, when in Burgundy shall be of me and mine the
coming known,
With unanimity entire the people of the land shall
own,
That never yet had any king so many fine and valiant
men,
Transmitted hither from so far as you have sent upon
the Rhine.

And you must know, most noble king, if you the matter
would prolong,
That she to Siegfried, best of men, son of Siegmund, did
belong;
A prince whom you have formerly here within your king-
dom seen;
To whom may honors very high consistently have granted
been.

Then said King Etzel in reply: Did she that mighty lord
 espouse,
The name of that exalted prince with such a flood of
 glory glows,
That I cannot the conscience have to disregard his gracious
 queen.
Her beauty, of such high degree, pleases well my senses
 keen.

The margrave answered yet again: In sooth I then to
 you declare,
That we in four and twenty days will ready be from here
 to fare.
To my dear consort, Gotalind, the tidings shall at once
 descend,
That to Kriemhilda I myself as envoy you have deigned
 to send.

Forthwith to Bechlaren away despatched the noble Rudi-
 ger
The information to his wife, the margravine superb and
 fair,
That he, upon the king's behalf, was sent to woo a high-
 born queen.
And then of Helka, tenderly, thought the lovely mar-
 gravine.

As soon as this important news by Gotalind was under-
 stood,
In some degree she sorry was. Anxious was she that she
 should,
In very truth a mistress have like the one of hereto-
 fore.
Of Helka earnestly she thought, and heaviness of heart
 she bore.

Sir Rudiger in seven days departed out of Hungary;
Whereat most joyful in his mood was good King Etzel
found to be.
For their equipment to prepare Vienna was the town he
chose;
Delay then in their setting out would he no longer inter-
pose.

In Bechlaren awaited him Dame Gotalind, his consort
fair;
And there the youthful margravine, the daughter of Sir
Rudiger,
Looked on her father joyfully, and his good company
of men.
A glorious reception home did they from lovely women
gain.

Ere from Vienna's ancient town the noble margrave Rudi-
ger
Rode on his way to Bechlaren, for use of him and his
were here
Their weapons and apparel fine upon the sumpter-mules
received.
In such a manner set they out that they of little were
bereft.

When they as far as Bechlaren within the town their way
had brought,
For those who him accompanied about convenient quarters
sought
The landlord with enticing words, which speedily they did
prepare.
The mighty Gotalind rejoiced to see her husband coming
there.

His loving daughter did the same, the margravine in fair-
 est youth;
 About her father's coming home overjoyed was she in
 truth.
 The heroes out of Hungary she gladly looked on as they
 sped;
 With great hilarity of mood the fair young noble maiden
 said:

Most welcome is my father here, and those who with him
 now alight.
 Thereat expressed most gracious thanks many a proud
 and worthy knight,
 Delivered in all friendliness to her, the youthful mar-
 gravine.
 Full well by Lady Gotalind were Rudiger's good wishes
 seen.

When she, upon the following night, reposed beside her
 noble lord,
 In syllables of tenderness did she of Rudiger ask
 word
 Whither he had thus been sent by his good prince of
 Hungary.
 My wife, fair Gotalind, he said, that gladly will I let you
 see.

On my good sovereign's account I seek a bride for him
 to wed,
 As Helka, his beloved spouse, hath now for many days
 been dead.
 I now am destined forth to ride to fair Kriemhilda on the
 Rhine,
 Who will, I hope, among the Huns become a great and
 powerful queen.

May God so will, said Gotalind, that us this happiness
 befall;
Such noble things of her we hear that hardly can we all
 recall.
She may perhaps to us restore our Helka of the olden
 days;
With crown on head among the Huns we joyfully on her
 may gaze.

Then said the margrave Rudiger: Esteemed and precious
 consort mine,
The bold companions who with us from here shall travel
 to the Rhine,
With them I beg you graciously of your possessions some
 to part;
When heroes live abundantly they entertain a valiant
 heart.

No one there is, responded she, if he will deign it to re-
 ceive,
On whom I will not cheerfully bestow what best will him
 relieve,
Ere you and your devoted men from hither your departure
 take.
Again the margrave answered her: Thereby you me will
 happy make.

Magnificent material then they from the wardrobes drew
 to light;
Sufficient raiment of all kinds fell to the lot of every
 knight,
To cover him most thoroughly, from shoulder even down
 to spur.
Whatever fancied Rudiger, to give him they did not de-
 mur.

At dawn upon the seventh day from Bechlaren recession
made
The landlord with his warriors. Enough of weapons they
conveyed,
And in profusion rich attire, among them through
Bavaria.
By robbers very seldom they assaulted were upon their
way.

Within a dozen days from then they found themselves upon
the Rhine;
And then the news that they had come could not a secret
long remain.
To all the kings and all their men it speedily was now
made known,
That foreign guests had there arrived. The monarch then
to ask began,

In case that any did them know, they should inform him
who they were.
The sumpter-mules were plain to see with all the burden
they did bear;
How very rich these heroes were thereby was plainly to
be seen.
Lodgings for them were prepared at once the city walls
between.

When these mysterious visitors within the city had ar-
rived,
The troop with curiosity was by the people there re-
ceived.
Their eagerness to know was great from whence came they
unto the Rhine.
The landlord then Sir Hagen asked: Who may these nobles
be so fine?

The knight of Tronya then replied: I have not on them
set my eyes;
When I have had a look at them it may be I can you
advise,
From whom and whence they hither come to visit us upon
the Rhine;
Utter strangers must they be if I cannot their names
assign.

By now these foreign visitors within their lodgings were
received,
His form the noble messenger in richest garments had
arrayed;
And also those who with him came as they toward the
palace rode:
Their whole apparel was superb, and cut exactly in the
mode.

The sprightly Hagen now remarked: So far as I do now
believe,
Many days have passed away since I these lords did e'er
perceive.
To me, however, it appears as if Sir Rudiger it
were,
Who comes from distant Hungary, the warrior so bold
and fair.

How am I able to believe, responded then the king, at
hand,
That he from distant Bechlaren hath travelled hither to
this land?
The stately and majestic king had hardly said his final
word
When lordly Hagen, where he stood, Sir Rudiger both saw
and heard.

Then he and his devoted friends ran quickly forward him
to meet ;
And then, alighting from their steeds, five hundred swordsmen,
on their feet,
A hearty welcome now received, these gallant knights of
Hungary.
Before had never messengers arrived in dress so fair to
see.

Von Tronya Hagen shouted out, in tones the loudest at
command :
Now highly welcome unto us are all the swordsmen here
at hand,
The governor of Bechlaren, with all his gallant knightly
host.
The agile Huns were now received with honors great within
the post.

The nearest kinsmen of the king forward pressed and
hither ran ;
Then Ortewein, the knight from Metz, to say to Rudiger
began :
A lengthy time has now elapsed since we about us here
have seen
Visitors, I you assure, who half so welcome could have
been.

For this reception so sincere they all together thanked
the knight ;
Toward the palace they repaired, the warriors and all
their band ;
Where they the noble monarch found, with numbers of his
valiant men.
From off his seat the king arose, with courtesy and friendly
mien.

With smiling affability toward the envoy he advanced,
And all his brave companions. The Prince Gernot also entranced
The guest with his reception warm, and all the men at his command.
To Rudiger the monarch then extended his imperial hand.

He him conducted to the seat whereon himself had just now sat,
And glasses ordered for them filled (and gladly always done is that),
With hydromel of quality, and with the very best of wine
That anywhere could be procured in all the land about the Rhine.

Now Garie and young Geiselher, together, also had arrived,
As well as Volker and Dankwart, who soon thereafter had contrived
To learn about the worthy guests. Delighted were they in their mood,
And greeted them before the king, the warriors so brave and good.

Von Tronya Hagen then observed to Gunther, his imperial sire:
With best of service to requite, should ever try your every squire,
What now the margrave, by this trip, so much to favor us hath done.
Some recompense receive for that should Gotalinda's honored one.

To this remark replied the king: No longer can I silence
keep;
How are matters going now, that let me know before I
sleep,
With Etzel and with Helka both, monarchs of the Huns'
fair land?
The margrave as an answer said: I that shall place at
your command.

He then arose from off his seat, both he and all his gallant
men,
And then responded to the king: Let me your permission
gain,
That I the tidings you may tell why my good master
Etzel me
Hath now at this auspicious time hither sent to Bur-
gundy.

He said: Whatever may by you have been transmitted
unto us,
I authorize you now to say, without my noble friends'
advice.
Your tidings let me understand, and all the warriors here
with me;
And every honor you could ask shall here to you now
granted be.

Then said the loyal messenger: To you commendeth, at
the Rhine,
His best and faithful services the great and mighty mon-
arch mine,
And all the most exalted friends that you about you now
enjoy.
This message he, in sending you, doth true sincerity
employ.

My noble master begs that you to sympathy with him
be led;
Disconsolate his people are; my mistress now some time
is dead,
The mighty Helka, powerful queen, my noble monarch's
lovely wife;
By which have orphans now become many a maid with
beauty rife,

Exalted princes' progeny, whom she hath hitherto brought
up;
By consequence, in all the land, the people drink from
sorrow's cup;
Unhappily they no one have who now for them will truly
care;
And thus by only slow degrees the monarch's grief will
disappear.

Now God reward him, Gunther said, that he this offering
now sends,
Of good and willing services, to me as well as all my
friends.
I joyfully the greeting hear, that you to me have now
made known;
And this endeavor to deserve will all who me as master
own.

Then said the prince of Burgundy, the brave and noble
Lord Gernot:
For beautiful Queen Helka's death may all the world its
sorrow show,
Because of virtues numerous that she did ever bring to
light.
The same did Hagen also say, and many another valiant
knight.

Then Rudiger again replied, the messenger in fine array:
 If you allow me, noble king, to you still further I would say,
 Of what my master hath to me entrusted for your royal ears;
 Since his beloved Helka's death he dwelleth constantly in tears.

To him it lately hath been told that Kriemhild now a widow is,
 Since Siegfried longer liveth not; and if the truth exist in this,
 And you the favor will permit, she shall the crown hereafter wear
 Before King Etzel's warriors. This bade my master me declare.

To this King Gunther made reply, with royal and majestic grace:
 My wishes she will carry out if this proposal she embrace.
 Of that I will you have informed before three days from now go by;
 If she this plan do not refuse, King Etzel how should I deny?

Meanwhile apartments were assigned, to which the visitors were shown.
 Such good attendance here they found that Rudiger was fain to own,
 That now among the monarch's men he many zealous friends could claim.
 Sir Hagen served him willingly, for once to him was done the same.

The noble Rudiger delayed until the second day was through.
The king his council had convened, as prudence prompted him to do,
And catechized his trusty friends, if they advisable it found,
That as a husband Kriemhild take King Etzel of Hungarian ground.

They then advised it every one; alone did Hagen hesitate;
And he to Gunther then remarked, the noble man of royal state:
If you sagacity would show, then carefully should you prevent
Her ever doing such a thing, if even on it she were bent.

To him the king responded thus: Why should I not it now embrace?
Whatever fortune to the queen may in the future come to pass,
Shall I most freely to her grant, for she my only sister is.
We ought the matter to promote if it will bring her any bliss.

Responded Hagen then again: In that you would not be discreet.
If you King Etzel knew as I, and his enormous wealth and might,
And her permitted him to wed, as now apparently is shown,
Above all others would you have cause the matter to bemoan.

Why that? asked Gunther in reply. Quite easily can I
 avoid
 So narrow an approach to him that I his hatred ever
 should
 Unfortunately have to bear, because her husband he be-
 comes.
 Thereon persisted Hagen yet: To me it inexpedient
 seems.

Invited then before the king were Geiselher and brave
 Gernot,
 To ascertain if those two lords thought Kriemhilda well
 would do,
 If for her consort she received the mighty and majestic
 king.
 Thereto was Hagen yet opposed; none other did ob-
 jection bring.

Then said the bold Burgundian, Sir Geiselher, the splendid
 knight:
 Friend Hagen, you for once, I think, do something fairly
 by her might;
 If only some amends to make for all the harm you have
 her done.
 What her some happiness may bring do not against with
 envy run.

To my dear sister, certainly, a great injustice you have
 wrought,
 Further said young Geiselher, a warrior in fear of
 nought;
 And well have you it merited if hatred for you she have
 hatched;
 As yet hath from a woman none so much enjoyment ever
 snatched.

That I am well aware of this, already thoroughly you
 know.
 Wherefore if now she Etzel wed, and in his land her
 presence show,
 In every way she can ordain she mischief unto us will
 work;
 For in her service there will come many a hardy man of
 mark.

The valorous and bold Gernot against all this to Hagen
 said:
 It probably will so fall out that not until the two are
 dead,
 We ever shall a visit pay within the mighty Etzel's
 land.
 Now let us fairly by her act, and to our honor it will
 tend.

But Hagen then again replied: I none will let say that
 to me;
 And if Kriemhilda wear the crown that noble Helka's used
 to be,
 Much injury will she us do, whene'er she can it
 execute.
 To let the matter quite alone you warriors would better
 suit.

Then Geiselher, fair Uta's son, replied in anger and dis-
 may:
 We do not, every one of us, the traitor's part desire to
 play.
 If any honors her await, let all of us rejoice
 thereat:
 Whatever, Hagen, you may say, to her my aid I
 consecrate.

When Hagen heard the prince's words he gloomy in his
mind was found.
Then Geiselher and Gernot too, intrepid knights in honor
bound,
Gunther as well, the mighty king, together made a cove-
nant,
That if Kriemhilda this desired they gladly would her
wishes grant.

At this the margrave Garie said: I to my lady now will
go,
And tell that she to King Etzel herself benevolent may
show ;
To whom so many warriors in fealty are duly
bound,
That he may well her compensate for all the grief she
ever found.

Then forth the agile warrior to fair Kriemhilda's quarters
sped.
She him received benignantly, and he to her now quickly
said :
A welcome you may give to me, and gladly, too, an envoy's
fee,
Since fortune you will disengage from all your grief and
misery.

To sue, my lady, for your hand hath hither to our country
sent
One of the very best of men that ever kingdom's vast
extent.
With veneration hath obtained, or stood beneath a royal
crown.
For this some noble knights apply, and me your brother
bids make known.

The sorrowing woman then replied: Forbid it God that
ever you,
Or any of my noble friends, should wish or inclination
show
To jest with poor unhappy me. What use should I be
to a man,
Who ever had the deepest love of any noble woman
won?

With energy she it opposed. And now at once to her
drew near
Her brother, chivalrous Gernot, with him the youthful
Geiselher.
They her entreated in all love to soften her despondent
mood;
For if King Etzel she accept for her it surely would be
good.

But nobody among them all was able to convince the
queen,
That she another man could love who ever on the earth
had been.
The swordsmen then entreated her: At least allow it so
to be,
If nothing else you will permit, that you the messenger
may see.

I will not that refuse to do, replied the royal dow-
ager;
Most willingly shall I receive the good and noble Rudi-
ger,
Because of his good qualities. If he had not to me been
sent,
From any other messenger I strictly should myself ab-
sent.

The knightly warrior, she said, at rising of to-morrow's
sun,
To my apartment hither send. If thus by you it can be
done,
What I thereon decided have, to him will I make fully
known.
On saying this the queen began anew to weep and sadly
groan.

For nothing else so earnestly desired the noble Rudi-
ger,
As that permitted he might be to look upon the queen so
fair.
He knew himself so sage to be that if but this to pass
were brought,
He surely could with her prevail and well accomplish what
he sought.

Betimes upon the following morn, while early mass was
being sung,
Approached the noble messengers amid a great assembled
throng.
Among them who with Rudiger toward the royal court
would go
Many swordsmen there were seen superbly clad in goodly
show.

The persecuted Kriemhild sat in grievous and despondent
mood,
And there awaited Rudiger, the messenger so brave and
good.
He found her in the same attire that she appeared in
every day;
Howbeit her whole retinue the richest dresses did dis-
play.

To meet him she arose and went as far as to her chamber door ;

And Etzel's warriors received with all the grace of heretofore.

With but eleven men besides he sought the presence of the queen ;

And honors great were offered him. Were better envoys ever seen ?

The noble lords were offered seats, as also was the envoy's band.

The margraves both were yet observed before her formally to stand,

Brave Eckewart and Garie both, the noble knights so fair and good.

By reason of her misery they no one saw in cheerful mood.

They saw before her sitting down many a maiden fair to view ;

Yet Dame Kriemhilda nothing had but grief and misery to show.

The bosom of the dress she wore was with her tears entirely wet :

The noble marquis noticed this, and longer not before her sat.

With courtesy to her he said: My lady fair, of royal blood,

To me and these companions who with me upon this journey rode,

Will you benignantly permit before you with respect to stand,

And modestly to you impart the reason why we sought this land ?

I joyfully will you allow, replied the queen, to grace inclined,
 To set before me what you wish; and I am well disposed
 in mind
 To listen to the tale you tell, for as an envoy you are
 good.
 Then the others well remarked her disaffected attitude.

Then said the knight from Bechlaren, the noble margrave
 Rudiger:
 By me to you, my noble queen, my master Etzel doth
 prefer
 His great fidelity and love here within this beauteous
 land;
 Your hand to worthily obtain good warriors he here hath
 sent.

He offers you a tender love, untinged by sorrow or distress;
 Affection everlasting now to you henceforth doth he
 profess,
 As he did once to Helka show, whom he bore ever in
 his heart.
 He wishes you the crown to wear to which she once did
 grace impart.

To him the queen at once replied: Most noble margrave
 Rudiger,
 Of all the grief of my poor heart should any one be made
 aware,
 He surely would not me commend to any other gallant
 man.
 I have already lost the best that any woman ever
 won.

In sorrow what can more console, replied the persevering
man,
Than tender and devoted love? She who to it surrender
can,
And hath selection made of him, whose warm affection she
hath gained,
Hath found in love the antidote for all that one hath ever
pained.

And if you now vouchsafe to wed this high and noble
lord of mine,
A dozen rich majestic crowns shall in your occupation
shine;
And also thirty princes' lands my master at your feet
will lay,
Of which his mighty hand hath brought all beneath his
regal sway.

You also will the mistress be of many a brave and worthy
man,
Who to my lady Helka was subjected in her queenly
span;
And numerous enchanting maids who in her service did
delight,
Of most exalted princely race. Thus pursued the hardy
knight.

And further will the king you give, as he hath bidden
me declare,
If you the crown will but consent by my good master's
side to wear,
The majesty and might supreme that always Helka
exercised.
The whole of Etzel's warriors will in your service be com-
prised.

In what way ever could again, replied the queen, in martyrdom,
My heart or soul indulge the wish a hero's consort to become?
In consequence of death to one such bitterness hath come to me,
That I until the end of life can never be from suffering free.

To all of this the Hun replied: Oh, mighty and illustrious queen,
With Etzel ever will your life be so resplendent and serene,
That you will revel in delight, if you to it consent will bring.
A countless host of fearless men are in allegiance to our king.

The damsels who did Helka serve, and all the maidens now with you,
Together in one company shall constitute your retinue;
Thereat will many a warrior in spirit and in heart exult.
To this, my lady, be advised; your good alone will hence result.

She courteously to him replied: Let in repose the matter be,
Until to-morrow in the morn, when you again can come to me;
And on this offer I will then my resolution give to you.
But acquiesce in her desire the swordsman now could nothing do.

When to their lodgings back again they all together had
retired,
That Geiselher to her be brought the noble woman then
desired;
Her mother also she would have. When they arrived, to
both she said:
It me befitteth but to weep; to nothing else should I be
led.

Then said her brother Geiselher: My heart betokens, sister
mine,
And gladly would I thus believe, that all thy misery and
pain
Would Etzel cause to disappear; if him for husband now
you take,
Whatever others may advise, I think it would you happy
make.

He surely can your wrongs repair, said Geiselher persist-
ently;
From rapid Rhone to lovely Rhine, from river Elbe unto
the sea,
A king more powerful than he hath never on the earth
been seen.
Thus fervently may you rejoice that you he chooseth for
his queen.

Dear brother, she to him replied, how can you me thereto
advise?
For me to weep and sorrow still seems more befitting in my
eyes.
Before his gallant warriors how could I at his court
appear?
If beauty ever I enjoyed, no longer have I that to
cheer.

Dame Uta to her daughter said, the other's counsel to
pursue:
The thing thy brother doth advise, that, my dearest daughter,
do;
Follow what thy friends suggest and well will it result
for thee.
Too long by far have I thee seen immersed in grief and
misery.

Then earnestly to God she prayed, that she his guidance
might acquire,
And wished that she had now to give gold and silver and
attire,
As once she had when yet survived her husband of un-
rivalled powers:
But not again would she enjoy such happy and delightful
hours.

Within herself reflected she: Shall I my body, to my
shame,
Upon a heathen man bestow, while I a Christian woman
am?
For that I justly should reproach have from all the world
to bear.
Gave every kingdom he to me, I must of such a thing
beware.

Here she let the matter rest. All night until the dawn of
day,
The noble lady in her bed absorbed in meditation
lay.
Of her so brilliant, speaking eyes did bitter tears obscure
the sight,
Until to matins she repaired at first pretence of morning
light.

The kings had also now arrived to celebration of the
mass.

Their sister took they by the hand, and eagerly did her
impress

With admonition to espouse the mighty prince of
Hungary.

But no one could the lady give a moment of tranquil-
lity.

Then were bidden come to her the messengers whom Etzel
sent,

Whose minds upon obtaining leave, and quitting Gunther's
land were bent,

Whatever outcome might obtain, whether it were no or
yes.

When Rudiger arrived at court his comrades tried on him
to press.

How necessary now it was to ascertain the monarch's
mind;

And this to set about at once. Expedient did all this
find,

As all again would homeward go, and dilatory was their
road.

Sir Rudiger was led therein to where the fair Kriemhilda
stood.

The warrior, as soon as there, solicited the noble
queen,

In gentle and persuasive words, to let explicitly be
seen,

The orders she did him desire to carry into Etzel's
land.

The hero found that his address she still determined to
withstand.

She never would again on earth with any man herself unite.

To all of this the margrave said: You there are very far from right;

So fair a frame as that of yours would you to ruin let proceed?

With honor might you well become a worthy warrior's wife, indeed.

But nothing that was urged availed, until the crafty Rudiger

Whispered slyly to the queen, too softly for the rest to hear:

He hopes that he may you avenge all injuries by you endured.

At last a little it appeared as if her sorrow might be cured.

Then openly to her he said: Now bid your tears cease to flow;

If you should have among the Huns no one but me to whom to go,

With me and my devoted friends, and all of those who me obey,

If any one have injured you, most dearly for it shall he pay.

Here it seemed as if a weight were taken from her burdened heart.

Take, Rudiger, an oath, she said, that if a soul shall do me hurt,

You will become the very first who will avenge the injury.

To her the noble margrave said: On that, O queen, you may rely.

With all the men he had with him did Rudiger to her
then swear
Her ever faithfully to serve, and that his every war-
rior
Would nothing unto her deny while she was in King
Etzel's land,
Whatever honor might demand. Thereon he offered her
his hand.

The true, devoted woman mused: If I by any means can
gain
So many strong and constant friends, but little care shall I
retain
Concerning what is said of me, who sorrow draw with
every breath.
Perhaps I yet may be avenged for my beloved Siegfried's
death.

As Etzel hath, she also thought, of warriors so great a
show,
Of whom I full control shall have, whate'er I will I then
can do.
He riches also hath so vast that I shall have whereof to
give.
For me the ruthless Hagen did of all that I possessed
deprive.

She then observed to Rudiger: Had I not reason good
to know
That paganism he professed, I willingly with you would
go,
Wherever he might me command, and him receive as life-
long mate.
Then again the margrave said: Do not, my lady, dwell
on that.

He not completely heathen is, of that you may be very
 sure;
 Baptized he was in days of yore, and is a master wholly
 pure.
 If possibly he hath again to paganism gone
 astray,
 Yet, lady, if you him can love you probably convert him
 may.

So many Christian warriors are in the service of the
 king,
 That union with him could to you no inconvenience ever
 bring.
 You easily might bring about that he, beneath your love's
 control,
 Should turn himself again to God with fervency of heart
 and soul.

Her brothers unto her then said: Surrender, sister, your
 consent;
 As to the winds you then can throw every grief you now
 lament.
 They thus entreated her so long that finally, in fear and
 dread,
 Before the heroes she agreed King Etzel of the Huns to
 wed.

I now, she said, will follow you; poor and miserable
 queen,
 Unto the Hun will I away when suitable the time is
 seen,
 If I devoted friends can find to lead me over to his
 land.
 Then offered to the heroes all the beautiful Kriemhild her
 hand.

Then Rudiger the margrave said: If but two warriors be
brought,
To them will I add many more. Thus well can it be
brought about,
That we can you with honor great accompany across the
Rhine.
No longer do I think it well that you in Burgundy re-
main.

Five hundred warriors have I, and kindred who with me
have come,
Who at your service all will be both here and in your
future home,
In whatsoever you command. And I myself will by you
stand;
And never shall I feel ashamed if you me of my trust
remind.

The trappings for your horses have in readiness prepared
for you.
What Rudiger hath you advised, no reason shall you have
to rue.
And also to your maidens tell, who hence will you ac-
company,
That we shall on the road be met by many a knight of
chivalry.

She yet possessed the jewelry that she in Siegfried's cav-
alcade
Had hither on the journey worn; whereby both she and
many a maid
In fitting pomp could sally forth when they were ready to
depart.
And oh, what saddles ready were when all the women
made a start!

If ever they had heretofore magnificent apparel
worn,
A full supply of grander still was on this journey with
them borne,
Because to them about the king such wondrous stories
had been told.
They opened their capacious chests fastened up from days
of old.

Full busily engaged were they until the noon of the fifth
day,
In seeking what they wished to take upon this journey far
away.
The rooms where she her treasures kept Kriemhilda to
unlock began,
For she intended to enrich the noble envoy's every
man.

She yet possessed a store of gold from out the Nibelungen-
land,
Which she among the trusty Huns would now divide with
lavish hand;
Scarcely could six hundred mules the whole of this deliver
hence.
The news of what Kriemhilda did was brought to Hagen's
knowledge thence.

Kriemhilda never will, he said, again me in affection
hold;
In consequence I must insist that here remain Sir Sieg-
fried's gold.
For how can I my foes permit with such a treasure hence
to go?
I know, indeed, too perfectly what Kriemhild with all this
will do.

If she it carry off from here, I have good reason to believe,
She will it only so divide that harm she will to me contrive.
Nor has she animals enough the whole upon their backs to hold.
So Hagen will it here retain, of that let Kriemhild now be told.

When she these tidings had received she was full of misery.
Then also to the sovereigns the same was told, to all the three,
Who tried the matter to arrange. Not able this to carry through,
The noble Rudiger remarked, as he much merriment did show:

My noble daughter fair of kings, why trouble you about this gold?
King Etzel, my dear sovereign, in such affection doth you hold,
That when before his eyes you come he will to you give such a hoard
As you can never dissipate; for that, my lady, take my word.

Responded then to him the queen: My very noble Rudiger,
Not ever did a royal dame so great a store of wealth acquire,
As that which stolen now from me my craven uncle Hagen hath.
Then came her brother, Prince Gernot, within the chamber where it was.

Armed with the king's authority, he placed the key within
the door.

Thereon the treasure of Kriemhild, of thirty thousand
marks or more,

Was from the chamber taken out, that it distributed might
be

Among the guests, as she desired, which Gunther pleased
exceedingly.

Then said Bechlaren's noble knight, the husband of fair
Gotalind:

If all of this vast treasure now did with Kriemhilda place
still find,

That once upon a time was brought from out the Nibel-
ungenland,

Yet never should it be disturbed by mine or fair Kriem-
hilda's hand.

Bid them keep it safely here, for surely none of it
will I;

I brought away from our own land so much of what belongs
to me,

That we upon our homeward road can quite well fare and
without loss.

Enough and far beyond enough have we for all our jour-
ney's cost.

A dozen coffers large and full her maidens had away con-
veyed,

Of gold the purest and the best that ever eyes of man
surveyed,

Preserved from ages long ago. To carry this they took
good heed,

As well as many ornaments, which they upon the road
might need.

The ruthless Hagen's might, she thought, far too strong
to be restrained.

Of gold for pious offerings a thousand marks she yet
retained;

This was given for the soul of her devoted murdered
one,

And this imagined Rudiger to be with highest purpose
done.

Then said the poor, unhappy queen: Wherever shall I
find a friend,

Who, from devoted love to me, himself will into exile
send,

And in my company will ride toward King Etzel's distant
land?

Whoever will may have my gold to horses buy and garments
grand.

To her this answer was at once conveyed by margrave
Eckewart:

Since to your service long ago I sacredly was set
apart,

Have I with strict fidelity to all your interests been
true;

And will, unto the end of life, go on the same by you
to do.

I also will of my good men five hundred take along with
me,

Whom I in service offer you in strictest of fidel-
ity.

Unseparated we will stay till death shall us compel to
part.

Kriemhilda for his promises to him gave thanks with all
her heart.

The horses now were forward led; about were they to leave
the land.

In earnest then began to weep the comrades all with the
brave band.

Dame Uta, the illustrious queen, and many a maiden plainly
showed

The sorrow of their aching hearts when off from them
Kriemhilda rode.

A hundred beautiful young maids she carried with her from
the land;

In goodly garments every one, each according to her
stand.

From full many a flashing eye descended tears of parting
pain.

But at King Etzel's distant court they lived to see much
joy again.

Then came the youthful Geiselher, with whom was hardy
Gernot, too,

Their retinue attended by, as custom them required to
do,

Their cherished sister through the land upon her journey
to escort.

And in their company they had a thousand warriors' sup-
port.

The agile Garie likewise came, as also did Sir Orte-
wein.

The kitchen steward, Rumold, too, to follow her did not
decline.

Sleeping quarters they sought out for all the women on
the way.

Sir Volker, as the marshal there, the cost of lodgings did
defray.

After the parting kiss received, loud weeping over all was heard,
Ere they to cultivated fields from citadel had been transferred;
And many unsolicited attended her upon her way.
But ere the city they had left King Gunther did his progress stay.

Before the Rhine they left behind they ordered on ahead to fly
Some swift and trusty messengers, into the land of Hungary,
In order to inform the king that for his consort Rudi-ger
Had managed well to woo and win the noble queen so grand and fair.

Swiftly sped the messengers. To hasten strove they well and hard,
For sake of honor to be gained, and also the immense reward.
When they, with their intelligence, had now arrived at their own home,
King Etzel heard such joyful word as heretofore had seldom come.

Because of their inspiring news the monarch bade his men to give
So freely to these messengers that they would able be to live
Forever afterward in bliss, till death an end to all should bring.
Affliction and anxiety by joy were driven from the king.

TWENTY - FIRST ADVENTURE

HOW KRIEMHILD TRAVELLED TO THE HUNS

THESE messengers let travel now while you may better understand
How that daughter of a king, Kriemhild the queen, went
through the land,
And where her brother Geiselher departed from her with
Gernot,
When they upon her had bestowed such service as affection
ought.

Upon the Danube's limpid stream, when they at Bergen
had arrived,
The queen they then solicited from escort now to be
relieved;
Because they all again desired to make their way toward
the Rhine.
These true, devoted kindred then were tears unable to re-
strain.

The vigorous young Geiselher hereon to fair Kriemhilda
said:
My sister, if at any time of me you have the slightest
need,
Whatever harm may threaten you, send news thereof to
me at home,
And I into King Etzel's land to serve you speedily will
come.

Upon the lips of all her kin implanted she a tender
kiss.
And thereupon to separate began, with words of friend-
liness,
The spirited Burgundians and Rudiger's intrepid
men:
But many a maiden fair to see accompanied the noble
queen.

Of these above a hundred went, on whom was rich attire
revealed,
Of multicolored fabrics made; and many a broad and
shining shield
Supported was before the queen, for her protection on
the road.
Then Volker, the intrepid knight, departed for his own
abode.

Across the Danube they advanced and came within Ba-
varia.
The news at once abroad was spread that guests in full re-
galia
Unknown to all had now arrived, where yet a convent
had its place,
And where the Inn, upon its course, within the Danube ends
its race.

Within the city of Passau, a bishop had his holy
seat.
From houses and from royal court the people came with
eager feet,
To give to these arriving guests a welcome on Bavarian
ground:
And there the bishop Pilgarin the beautiful Kriemhilda
found.

To eyes of warriors in that land not displeasing was the
sight,
When in her brilliant retinue fair maids so many came
bedight.
With amorous glances them to woo began the son of many
a knight.
Good lodgings for the visitors were quickly found, to their
delight.

At Pledelingen everything for needed rest was soon
procured.
The people came from everywhere, by such a welcome
sight allured.
Whatever any guest might need in best of will was him
supplied,
And with all courtesy received. The same was done on
every side.

The bishop and his lovely niece together travelled to
Passau.
And quickly as the citizens within the town were made
to know
The prince's sister's only child, the fair Kriemhilda, had
arrived,
The merchants in a body met, and she with honor was
received.

When hope the bishop signified that she a time with him
would stay,
The margrave Eckewart replied: Impossible is that to-
day;
It necessary is that we at once proceed to Rudger's
land.
Many swordsmen us await, for they the news have now at
hand.

By this time had the tidings reached the lovely Gotalinda's ear;
She then herself prepared in haste, as also did her daughter dear;
For Rudiger had sent her word that he would like, when drawing near,
If she would the illustrious queen try to comfort and to cheer,

By riding out to welcome her with all the men at her command,
As far as to the River Ens. While that in preparation was,
The roads at hand and far remote full of people could be seen,
Who wished the visitors to meet, both on horses and on foot.

As far as Everdingen now had come the fair, illustrious queen.
'Twas known that in Bavaria numerous robbers could be seen,
Who them would plunder on the road, as was their custom at this time;
And gladly would upon them all inflict much injury and harm.

But this provision made against had well the noble Rudiger;
Along with him a thousand men, or even more, did he transfer.
Then came the lovely Gotalind, Lord Rudiger's devoted wife;
With her a troop of warriors in numbers great and courage rife.

Across the Traun proceeded they toward the Ens upon the
plain ;
Where cottages and bulky tents were all about erected
seen,
Wherein the visitors good rest could be provided with at
night.
Over needful food, withal, the margrave kept strict over-
sight.

Ahead from her pavilion rode forth, her Majesty to
meet,
The beautiful Dame Gotalind. There then advanced upon
the street,
With jingling bridles well bedecked, many splendid steeds
with her.
Thus grandly was the queen received, and all for sake
of Rudiger.

From every side upon the plain came to greet her on
the way,
With gallant riding full of grace many a hero proudly
gay.
They exercised in chivalry, reviewed by many a lovely
maid ;
Nor were the heroes' services toward the women ill re-
paid.

When Rudiger's devoted men at last before the guests
came now,
Was many a shattered spear and lance seen aloft in air
to go,
From hands of hardy warriors, according to chivalric
ways.
The tournament was held, indeed, for sake of lovely woman's
praise.

The sport at last was at an end. Then many a bold and
 hardy man
 Did greetings to another give. Now conducted to the
 van
 The lovely Gotalinda was, where she found Kriemhilda
 fair.
 And who the noble women served had but little leisure
 there.

Bechlaren's noble governor now riding to his wife was
 seen.
 But little grief experienced the good and noble mar-
 gravine,
 At seeing him secure and sound, back again from off the
 Rhine.
 Her heaviest solicitude did now with joy and mirth com-
 bine.

When she her husband had received, he her requested on
 the plain
 With all her women to alight, whom she in service did
 retain.
 Then notable anxiety did many a hardy man dis-
 play ;
 And service to the noble dames was rendered with great
 industry.

The lady Kriemhild now observed the margravine and
 retinue,
 As in her presence they drew up. She ordered nearer
 not to go.
 With firmer grasp of bridle-hand she drew the rein upon
 her steed,
 And from the saddle to alight she speedily did then
 proceed.

The bishop then was seen to lead, with Eckewart together
joined,

His sister's daughter, fair Kriemhild, hither to Dame
Gotalind.

Before her must all draw aside who in her royal path were
seen.

The noble foreigner then kissed upon her mouth the mar-
gravine.

Then said in courteous syllables the fair and noble mar-
gravine:

Great joy, dear lady, me it gives that I so fortunate have
been,

As here within this land to see thy graceful form with mine
own eyes.

Nothing now more lovely could possibly for me
arise.

God bless you, then Kriemhilda said, Gotalind so fair and
young;

If only I my health retain with this brave son of Bota-
lung,

I hope it will be well for you that me in person you have
seen.

Not either a foreboding had of what in future she would
glean.

Toward each other courteously proceeded many a lovely
maid;

And in their service to attend the gallant warriors were
glad.

When the greetings over were, amid the clover sat they
down,

And many now acquaintance made who one another had
not known.

Wine for the women now was drawn. It was the middle of
the day;
The noble company for rest did not much longer there
delay:
They forward went until, at hand, more spacious dwellings
still they found;
And splendid services received the visitors upon this
ground.

Throughout the night they tarried here, inviting sleep and
sweet repose.
The populace of Bechlaren themselves and all did so dis-
pose,
As worthily to entertain so many guests of high re-
pute.
To this Sir Rudiger had seen; of nothing were they
destitute.

The windows in the castle walls wide open every one was
found;
And Bechlaren itself was seen without a lock or fastening
bound.
Then rode the visitors within, and gladly welcomed all
they were;
And good apartments for each one were furnished them
by Rudiger.

The daughter of Sir Rudiger proceeded with her
maidens in,
Where she with courtesy received the beautiful and noble
queen.
Her mother furthermore was there, the lovely wife of
Rudiger;
And greeted with affection were all, at once, the maidens
there.

Then taking each another's hand, they all proceeded in this
way,
Toward a fine, extensive hall, with furnishings in rich display,
Before and in the sight of which the waters of the Danube
flowed.
In open air they took their seats, and joy in many
pastimes showed.

I cannot now to you relate what further happened to
them there.
That they in such wise hasten must from hence did loud
complaints prefer
Kriemhilda's hardy warriors, who felt it as indeed a
grief.
The swordsmen out of Bechlaren attending them is past
belief.

Full many gentle services were offered by the margrave
bold.
Then presented Queen Kriemhild a dozen bracelets, all of
gold,
To Gotalinda's daughter fair; and garments, too, as rich
and grand
As any she had with her brought hither to King Etzel's
land.

Although the Nibelungen gold had all from her been torn
away,
Yet every one whom there she saw she could with warm
affection sway,
By the little property that still in her control re-
mained.
The retinue of Rudiger by her command great gifts
obtained.

Likewise the Lady Gotalind upon the women from the
 Rhine,
 Such honors also did bestow, with benefactions great and
 fine,
 That hard among the foreigners it was but even one to
 find,
 Who jewelry did not receive, or costly raiment, from her
 hand.

When after breaking of their fast they farther on the
 way would go,
 Her most devoted services the lady of the house did
 show,
 With declarations of good will toward King Etzel's lovely
 bride.
 In parting, fondly she caressed the daughter of the noble
 chief.

The maiden to the queen now said: If ever you believe it
 good,
 I know full well how happily my father his dear daughter
 would
 Allow, my queen, with you to be, in this fair land of
 Hungary.
 Afterward Kriemhilda found how firm was her
 fidelity.

The horses came caparisoned and stood in front of Bech-
 laren.
 And when at last her gracious leave had taken the ex-
 alted queen,
 Of both the daughter and the wife of noble Margrave
 Rudiger,
 Then also with a fond farewell departed many a maiden
 fair.

They seldom one another saw when these good days had
come to nought.

As they passed over Medelick the people there in honor
brought

Many a golden goblet rich, full to the brim with grateful
wine,

To the guests upon their way; and in a welcome warm did
join.

A mighty lord here had his seat, who was by all as Astold
known;

By whom they were upon their way into the land of Aus-
tria shown,

Hard by the town of Mautaren, upon the Danube down
below;

And here in service to the queen the populace respect did
show.

With loving token of regard the bishop parted from his
niece;

And ardently entreated he that she might live in future
peace,

And merit all the high respect that Helka had before her
done.

And, oh, what veneration she among the Huns had quickly
won!

They soon upon the Traisen came; the guests upon its
banks convened,

Most diligently waited on by Rudiger's intrepid
men,

Until the men of Hungary came riding up across the
land;

And then upon the noble queen the highest honors came
to hand.

Beside the Traisen's flowing tide the Hunnish king of high
 renown
 A massive citadel possessed, in all the countryside well
 known,
 And Traisenmauer was its name. Queen Helka once re-
 sided there,
 Behaving with such piety as seldom found is any-
 where,

Unless it with Kriemhilda be, whom pleasure giving
 always gave.
 After all her misery some comfort now she ought to
 have,
 Honored for her noble acts by all the great King Etzel's
 men.
 Among these heroes had she soon the highest commenda-
 tion won.

King Etzel's mighty sovereignty afar and near was greatly
 famed,
 And never was there any time that at his court could not
 be found
 The most intrepid warriors that ever on the earth were
 seen ;
 Of Christian or of pagan faith, for all with him did there
 convene.

In his employ were everywhere, as never happens now,
 perforce,
 As many of the Christian faith as heathens, in full inter-
 course ;
 To whom, according to the way in which among them-
 selves they lived,
 By goodness of the noble king, the wants of all were soon
 relieved.

TWENTY - SECOND ADVENTURE

HOW KRIEMHILD WAS RECEIVED AMONG THE HUNS

AT Traisenmauer she remained until had come the
fourth day;
And all this time upon the roads the dust no instant quiet
lay.
It filled the air on every hand like smoke arising from a
fire,
As forward rode King Etzel's men through the land of
Austria.

King Etzel, at this very time, the glad intelligence re-
ceived
(Which banished from his anxious mind the thought of all
that once him grieved),
How royally Kriemhilda was her progress making through
the land.
Then hurried off the noble king to where his promised
love he found.

Of many various languages, could then be seen upon the
way,
Within King Etzel's retinue, intrepid knights in good
array;
Of Christians and of pagans both a brilliant and extensive
host.
When they the lovely women met, with pleasure did they
them accost.

Of Russians and of Greeks as well rode there many a
 valiant man ;
 The Poles and the Wallachians forward like a whirlwind
 ran,
 On splendid and full-blooded steeds, which they magnifi-
 cently rode ;
 And every one of them appeared in costume of his own
 abode.

Out of the district known as Kiew came many a brave
 and hardy man ;
 The savage Peschenegen, too. With bow and arrow they
 began
 To shoot at all the birds they saw flying swiftly through
 the air.
 They forcibly the arrows drew, to utmost stretch the bow
 would bear.

In Austria, by the Danube's bank there is found a little
 town,
 Which by the name of Tulna goes. Here to her was
 soon made known
 Many a novel custom strange that she had never seen be-
 fore.
 Received by many was she here, who sorrow later through
 her bore.

King Etzel now himself drew near, preceded by a famous
 troop,
 Magnificent and full of joy ; a courtly and well-favored
 group
 Of four and twenty princely knights, all powerful and full
 of fire ;
 As on the queen their eyes to cast they nothing did so
 much desire.

Ramung, a mighty reigning duke from out of brave
Wallachia,
With seven hundred hardy men came on the run to wel-
come her;
Like eager birds upon the wing to her abode they quickly
flew.
The Prince Gibeka also came with his majestic ret-
inue.

Then with agility approached Hornbogue with a thousand
men,
Forward from the monarch's side to where he saw the
gracious queen,
With strutting gait and loud huzzahs, after the custom
of their land.
The chieftains also of the Huns rode in a fashion truly
grand.

Then came from out the Danish land the bold, redoubtable
Hawart;
With Iring, hight the nimble one, without a trace of guile
or art;
And Irnfried of Thuringia, a most exalted, valiant
man.
These all Kriemhilda so received that honor she thereby
did gain.

A dozen times one hundred men they numbered in the
gallant throng.
Then the swordsman Bloedel came with his array, three
thousand strong.
A brother to the king was he, belonging to Hungarian
ground,
And rode with elegant display to where he Queen Kriem-
hilda found.

At last King Etzel came himself, and also mighty Diete-
rich,
With all the heroes of his court. In every kind of knightly
trick
Were many noble warriors seen who bravery had often
showed.
Kriemhilda was at all of this exalted much in heart and
mood.

Then to her Majesty now spake the noble knight, Sir
Rudiger,
The king, my lady, would bestow on you a fitting welcome
here.
Whom I shall you advise to kiss, on them a kiss with grace
bestow,
For not to Etzel's warriors may you all equal favors
show.

Assisted now the gracious queen was from her palfrey to
dismount.
No longer would King Etzel then delay on any one's
account;
Himself he swung from off his horse, with many a bold,
intrepid man;
And, filled with his exceeding joy, to where Kriemhilda was
he ran.

Two princes of unbounded might, as we have verily been
told,
Accompanied the noble queen, within their hands her train
to hold,
When the royal King Etzel came his lovely bride
to meet;
And she in friendly wise the prince allowed herself with kiss
to greet.

Her heavy veil she pushed aside. Her countenance, like
statue carved,
Resplendent shone amid her gold. Full many a hardy
man observed
That even Lady Helka could more beautiful have never
been.
Standing near her, close at hand, was Etzel's brother
Bloedel seen.

Then the margrave Rudiger this prince to kiss did her
advise;
Also Gibek and Dietrich too, noble heroes good and
wise.
A dozen of the warriors were thus saluted by the
queen;
And then on many a noble knight in greeting she to look
was seen.

At every moment of the time that Etzel by Kriemhilda
stood,
The youthful swordsmen exercised, as still exists the
habitude,
In various games of chivalry; themselves before her they
displayed.
Pagan and Christian in his way each for himself high
honor made.

In hardy and imperious way did now the mighty
Dietrich's men
The broken fragments of the shafts into the air send
flying then,
High above the shields they bore each on his stout and
knightly arm.
And also by the German guests did many a buckler come
to harm.

From all the snapping of the spears disconcerting was
 the sound,
 From everywhere in all the land the warriors came upon
 the ground,
 And also all the monarch's guests, a company of noble
 men.
 At last the royal king withdrew together with Kriemhild
 the queen.

A grand pavilion near they found, and thither they their
 footsteps bent.
 All over was the spacious plain bedecked with canopy and
 tent;
 That after all their labors there repose much needed could
 be had.
 The gallant heroes thereunto conducted many a charming
 maid,

To fair Kriemhilda, now their queen; who well within
 its shelter sat,
 Upon a rich and sumptuous couch. The margrave Rudi-
 ger had that
 Arranged with such magnificence that she it restful found
 and good.
 His heart o'erflowing with delight, the monarch Etzel by
 her stood.

What they together talked about to me is utterly un-
 known.
 Her Majesty's white hand, I know, he gently held within
 his own.
 Thus side by side they loving sat; while Rudiger, the
 hardy knight,
 Would not with her yet let the king himself in privacy
 delight.

In every portion of the plain the tournament was bidden
cease.

With honor to an end were brought the joyful noises
in the place.

Then speedily to quarters went the whole of noble Etzel's
men;

All over lodgings were prepared for every one to rest
therein.

The long day now was overpast; they rested here through-
out the night,

Until was visible once more the dawning of the morning
light;

When many a gallant warrior himself again to horse did
spring.

And, oh, what frolics they contrived in honor of the glo-
rious king!

The king commanded then the Huns to act as honor bade
them do.

Thereon from Tulna rode they forth toward Vienna next
to go.

In rich and beautiful attire were numberless fair women
seen,

Who with all honors well received the powerful King
Etzel's queen.

In fulness to satiety was everything for them pre-
pared,

That wanted possibly could be. Many a valiant swordsman
had

With joy made ready for the feast. To quarters shown
was every man.

The monarch's wedding festival amid much merriment be-
gan.

It quite impossible was found to lodge them all within the town ;
 So those who were not counted guests by Rudiger were orders shown,
 In all the country-side about themselves with quarters to provide.
 Unceasingly, I know full well, the king was at Kriemhilda's side.

Lord Dieterich, the warrior, and many another noble knight,
 Upon themselves the labor took, and found it not to their delight,
 Of seeing that the visitors did not themselves dejected find ;
 So Rudiger and all his friends provided games of every kind.

This marriage ceremony fell upon the day of Pentecost,
 When Etzel, at Kriemhilda's side, was in his happiness engrossed,
 Within Vienna's ancient town. She verily so many men
 During her first husband's life had not within her service won.

By gifts was she to many a one, who a stranger was, made known.
 Thereover to the visitors did many now to speak begin :
 Kriemhilda, we had thought indeed, had of her riches been deprived ;
 Yet she with her donations now to make us marvel hath contrived.

The marriage festival endured a period of fifteen days;
And if, of any other king, have spoken our heroic lays,
Who ever such a wassail held, to us the same is quite unknown.
Every one who was there seen did newly made apparel don.

She never in her life had sat, while in the Netherlands she lived,
Before so many warriors. Indeed, I have it well received,
That, if Sir Siegfried riches had, yet never held he in command
So many noble warriors as here she saw at Etzel's hand.

Nor ever did a monarch give at wedding festival or feast
Such quantities of rich attire, long and broad and good in taste,
Or garments of such quality as here were by the people won.
And for the fair Kriemhilda's sake all of this was gladly done.

Friends as well as visitors were in an equal frame of mind;
Of sparing did they never think the best of chattels they could find.
Whatever any one might wish, to him with readiness was brought;
And many a man through charity was left with absolutely nought.

Whenever to her mind it came how at the Rhine she once
 had sat
 At her beloved husband's side her eyes became with sad-
 ness wet.
 Yet always so her tears she hid that her emotions were
 unknown.
 And after all her misery the greatest honors her were
 shown.

What others might in kindness do was nothing but a puff
 of wind,
 Compared with Dietrich's charity. All the gifts of every
 kind
 That he received from Botlung's son he scattered with
 profusion grand.
 Great marvels also were achieved by means of Rudger's
 open hand.

The hardy swordsman Bloedelein, who made his home in
 Hungary,
 Commanded many travelling-chests completely disem-
 bogued to be
 Of all their silver and their gold; and this away he all
 did give.
 The heroes of the king were seen in plenitude of joy to
 live.

The minstrels of the royal court, Werbel named and
 Schwemmelein,
 At least a thousand marks, I think, did each to his own
 use assign,
 At this grand wedding festival (or perchance still more
 than that),
 Whereat the beautiful Kriemhild beneath the crown with
 Etzel sat.

By morning of the eighteenth day the heroes from Vienna
rode.

In practising the knightly games were many shields cut
through from blows

By lances which were borne along in every single warrior's
hand.

Thus the monarch Etzel came with joy upon Hun-
garian land.

In Heimberg's antiquated town they rested for the follow-
ing night;

And not a soul upon the way could rightly estimate the
might

In which this overwhelming host in knightly wise rode o'er
the land.

And, oh, what lovely women too within their domiciles were
found!

Beneath the fort at Meisenberg to board the vessels they
began;

And covered was the water there with gallant horse as
well as man,

As if it were the earth itself that now away was seen to
float.

The women, worn and travel-tired, could now repose upon
the boat.

Together were securely bound many a sturdy little
ship;

So that but little harm might come from flood and wave
on this good trip.

Above, a shelter to afford, was many a costly awning
stretched;

As if just now as formerly the spacious plain beneath
them reached.

To Etzel's castle by this time the joyful news had run
its race;
And all thereat were much rejoiced, both men and women
in the place.
The mighty Etzel's retinue, that once acknowledged
Helka's sway,
With Queen Kriemhilda afterward spent many a glad and
happy day.

There standing and awaiting her was many a fair and
noble maid,
Who ever since Queen Helka died had heavy grief upon
them laid.
Seven daughters, too, of kings, the fair Kriemhilda also
found,
By whom was splendidly adorned all of Etzel's kingly
ground.

A damsel who was Herrat named was first of this grand
retinue,
The noble Helka's sister's child, in whom were virtues not
a few.
Betrothed was she to Dieterich, and issue of a mighty
king,
A daughter of the great Nentwein, to whom did yet much
honor cling.

At the arrival of these guests rejoiced she greatly in her
mind;
And for their comfort she applied costly goods of every
kind.
Whoever could to you describe how the king thereafter
lived?
The Huns had never in their lives from any queen such
joy derived.

When the monarch with his wife up riding from the
river came,
Of every one who there was led imparted was the race and
name
Unto the noble Queen Kriemhild, that she the better might
them greet.
How great the majesty and grace with which she sat in
Helka's seat!

The very best of services became in plenty to her
known.
Much gold the queen distributed, and also many a precious
stone,
As well as silver and attire. Everything that from the
Rhine
She carried into Hungary did she to give away in-
cline.

And also with their services in future would themselves
submit
The kindred of the noble king, and all who at his feet
did sit;
So much that Helka never could such high command and
power wield,
As did the beautiful Kriemhild till she her life to fate
must yield.

In such high honor stood the court, as did indeed the whole
brave band,
That never was there any time but one amusements could
command;
Whereby did every one therein have all that he could well
require,
All furnished by the king's good will, aided by the queen's
desire.

TWENTY - THIRD ADVENTURE

HOW KRIEMHILD THOUGHT OF AVENGING HER WRONGS

THE king and queen in honor great, as all the truth-
ful ones declare,
In wedded bliss together lived until had come the seventh
year,
During which the noble queen presented Etzel with
a son.
At this King Etzel in his joy deemed all worth having
he had won.

Until she had her wish obtained, unceasingly she them ap-
prised,
That she most earnestly desired to have the infant heir
baptized,
According to the Christian rites. Gottlieb the infant then
was named.
Thereover was the greatest joy throughout the whole of
Etzel's land.

The sterling qualities by which Queen Helka had upheld
her rule,
In these did Queen Kriemhilda now endeavor hard her-
self to school.
From good Herrat, the foreign maid, the customs of the
land she learned,
Who yet in silence and alone bitterly for Helka
mourned.

By native-born and aliens, too, well recognized it long
had been,
That never had a monarch's land a better or more virtuous
queen
In all its history possessed; and opposition none would
hear.
For this commended her the Huns until arrived the thir-
teenth year.

She very well could now perceive that none was hostile in
his mind
(As oft indeed do royal wives the prince's gallant warriors
find),
And that, on each succeeding day, a dozen kings before
her stood.
She recollected, then, the wrongs that she had borne in
widowhood.

She also of the honors thought that in the Nibelungen-
land
Upon her freely were bestowed, of which she had by
Hagen's hand,
With her beloved Siegfried's death, so pitilessly been de-
prived,
And if to him she could not do some injury while yet he
lived.

This, she mused, could be arranged if I could draw him to
this land.
She often pictured, too, in dreams, advancing with her
hand in hand,
Her younger brother Geiselher. She kissed him also many
times,
In the dream visions of her sleep. To grievous woe this led
betimes.

The devil's self it must have been that fair Kriemhilda had inspired,
 From Gunther, in the bygone days, so lovingly to have retired,
 And him, in far-off Burgundy, in expiation to caress.
 Now, anew, began to fall the burning tears upon her dress.

It heavy lay upon her heart from early morn until the night,
 How she had been with cruel force, against all principle and right,
 Compelled against her every wish to wed a man of pagan faith;
 This misery had been compelled by Hagen and King Gunther both.

How that to properly avenge she ever thought of all the day.
 Indeed I now so powerful am, whoever that disrelish may,
 That I upon my enemies may bring some great and heavy grief.
 If I could so to Hagen do my joy would be beyond belief.

Often yearns my bleeding heart still for my beloved one.
 If I could only near them be, who me this injury have done,
 My dear beloved husband's death avenged on them should surely be;
 I scarcely can in patience wait, she said in her heart's agony.

Admired and loved she was by all who in the monarch's
service were,
And acted as her body-guard; and worthily did she so
fare.
Her chamberlain was Eckewart, and many friends he
thereby won.
The powerful Kriemhilda's will to make a stand against
was none.

She also thought each passing day: The king I warmly
will entreat,
That in the goodness of his heart he graciously will me
permit
To have my relatives and friends invited to Hungarian
land.
The wickedness of her intent did none the slightest under-
stand.

As Kriemhild on a certain night beside the noble monarch
lay;
And he her held within his arms, as was his customary
way,
The charming woman to caress, for she to him was as
his life,
To think about her enemies began the king's illustrious
wife.

Then to the monarch she observed: Most noble and illus-
trious lord,
Of you I earnestly would beg, if with your grace it would
accord,
And I the favor have deserved, to make it plain to me
this night,
That all my friends and relatives have met with favor in
your sight.

To her replied the mighty king in stern fidelity of
soul:

That speedily shall you perceive. Whate'er those heroes
may befall,

Of honor or of riches good, rejoiceth me as if my
own;

For never by a woman's love could better friends be ever
won.

To him still further said the queen: You know as
well, indeed, as I,

That I have rich and noble friends. It therefore doth me
mortify,

That they so very seldom come to visit me in this your
land.

As kinless I am looked upon by all the folk on every
hand.

Again in answer Etzel said: Much-beloved wife of
mine,

Consider they it not too far, invite will I across the
Rhine,

Whomever you would like to see, to visit us within our
land.

The deepest gratitude she felt, when she his will did
understand.

If you, my dearest lord, she said, to me trustworthily
incline,

You messengers without delay will send to Worms across
the Rhine.

Thereby will I unto my friends make known my feelings
and desire;

And then will many noble knights to us within this land
repair.

Whatever you command, he said, I will have done with honesty.

Your friends you cannot in good truth so earnestly rejoice to see,

The honored Uta's noble sons, as I to see them shall be glad.

That they are strangers far away has very often made me sad.

If you it please, he further said, well-beloved consort mine,

I think it well as messengers to forward to these kin of thine.

My confidential minstrel knights, to your far Burgundian land.

He ordered then the tuneful pair to be without delay at hand.

Then soon the two together came to where they saw the noble king,

Sitting at his consort's side. To them he now the news did bring,

That they as trusty messengers must go to the Burgundian land;

With bountiful and rich attire to be supplied did he command.

For four and twenty warriors were garments suitable prepared.

To them, moreover, by the king the information was declared

How they were Gunther to invite, together with his valiant men.

The lady Kriemhild thereupon to talk with them aside began.

The mighty monarch further said: I now will tell you
what to do.

I offer to my every friend what love and goodness I can
show;

And hope the trouble they will take to travel hither to
my land.

Such truly welcome guests could I but seldom see before
me stand.

And if with my most earnest wish you find all ready to
comply,

The relatives of Queen Kriemhild, thereon shall they not
make delay,

But on account of friendship's claims to my court festival
repair;

That there the brothers of my wife let me their affec-
tion share.

To this the fiddler thus replied, the proud and haughty
Schwemmelein:

When will this royal festival be held in this good land
of thine?

That we unto your Rhenish friends the information may
convey.

King Etzel to him thus replied: When comes the next mid-
summer day.

As you have ordered we will do, answered then Sir Wer-
belein.

Kriemhilda then the messengers desired their footsteps to
incline

Secretly toward her room, and private speech with them
there had,

Whereby to many a warrior events occurred to make him
sad.

Unto the messengers she said: Advantage great without a
doubt
To you will come if carefully you carry my instructions
out;
And when within our land you are, shall say exactly what
I bid.
I will you give superb attire, and wealthy shall you both
be made.

Whomever of my kinsmen you may chance upon to set
your eyes,
In distant Worms upon the Rhine, on no account must you
apprise,
That me you ever have observed disturbed or troubled in
my mood;
And greet most heartily for me all those heroes brave
and good.

Beg them earnestly to grant everything my consort
asks,
And, by so doing, me relieve from all my heavy woes and
tasks.
Here among the Huns I seem not a bosom friend to
have;
If I were but a noble knight my way to them I oft should
make.

And careful be this word to say to my good brother, Prince
Gernot,
That not a person on the earth could more herself to
him devote.
Beg that he will with him bring hither to me in this
land
The most beloved friends we have, that we may honor have
at hand.

Say also unto Geiselher that I have begged you him re-
 mind,
 That not by any deed of his did ever I a sorrow
 find.
 I therefore evermore shall him within this land right gladly
 see.
 And I, moreover, all my life shall always at his service
 be.

To my dear mother also tell what honors me the people
 show.
 And if Von Tronya Hagen fail the journey with them to
 pursue,
 Who will be able them to show the thoroughfares across
 the land?
 The roads that lead to Hungary from youth hath he
 familiar found.

The messengers no reason knew why she so sturdily de-
 clined
 Von Tronya Hagen, of them all, to let remain alone be-
 hind
 Within his home upon the Rhine. They knew it later to
 their grief;
 Through him was many a warrior menaced with a fearful
 death.

A letter under hand and seal unto the messengers they
 gave;
 With ample goods departed they, and in a lordly style
 could live.
 Of Etzel now they took their leave, and also of his lovely
 queen;
 And clad in sumptuous attire, none more grand were
 ever seen.

TWENTY - FOURTH ADVENTURE

HOW WERBEL AND SCHWEMMEL BROUGHT THE MESSAGE

WHEN Etzel his two melodists as envoys to the Rhine-land sent,
Disseminated was the news in every country as they went.
By swiftly flying couriers, did he both order and entreat
To his appointed festival, where many a one his death did meet.

The messengers rode off at once out of the country of the Huns,
Whence they had hastily been sent to that of the Burgundians,
To three exalted sovereigns and their august chivalric host;
To bid them to his festival. They hurriedly away did post.

At Bechlaren these messengers, as soon as ever they arrived,
Were gladly well attended to, and were of not a thing deprived.
Both Rudiger and Gotalind their salutations sent erst-while
To all the soldiers of the Rhine, as also did the margrave's child.

Without some rich and costly gifts they did not let the
 envoys go,
 That so the better on the way might Etzel's subjects make
 fine show.
 To Uta and to her three sons his best respects sent
 Rudiger.
 Devoted so to them had been a noble margrave
 ne'er before.

To Queen Brunhilda likewise they wished all love and
 happiness,
 Continual fidelity, and in their service readi-
 ness.
 This message after they received the envoys farther would
 proceed;
 And Gotalind, the margravine, petitioned God them both
 to guide.

Before the messengers had yet passed fully from Bavarian
 ground,
 The swift and busy Werbelein the godly bishop sought and
 found.
 What kind of greeting he then sent to all his friends upon
 the Rhine,
 I never have the tidings had. Of gold, however, pure and
 fine,

He freely gave the messengers. As they their way would
 further win,
 If I could see them here with me, observed the bishop
 Pilgerin,
 I gratified in soul should be, the sons of that dear sister
 mine;
 For I, alas, can hardly go to visit them upon the
 Rhine.

The road they took upon their way in journeying toward
the Rhine,
That am I unprepared to say. Their stock of gold and
raiment fine
Unstolen was allowed to be, fearing Etzel's wrath to
bring;
So salutary was the power wielded by the noble
king.

Within a dozen days from then successfully they reached
the Rhine,
Before the citadel of Worms, the good Werbel and
Schwemmelein.
It then was formally announced unto the monarch and his
men,
That foreign messengers had come; to question Gunther
then began.

Thus said the guardian of the Rhine: Of you, who can to
us confide,
Whence come the noble visitors who thus into our kingdom
ride?
Of this were all in ignorance until upon the messen-
gers
Von Tronya Hagen set his eyes, who thus to Gunther did
discourse:

Some tidings, ere the day is past, I can assure you we
shall glean;
The mighty Etzel's fiddlemen have I within your court-
yard seen.
Your sister must these messengers to us upon the Rhine
have sent;
And on their noble lord's account must we a welcome good
present.

Without a moment's wasted time directly to the hall they
 rode;
 And never minstrels of a prince travelled in such lordly
 mode.
 The noble monarch's retinue at once received them when at
 hand;
 Lodgings to them were assigned and cared for was their
 raiment grand.

Their travel costumes were so rich, withal so elegantly
 made,
 That in all honor could they well therein toward the king
 proceed.
 Yet longer willing were they not this raiment at the court
 to wear.
 If any one would them accept began these envoys to in-
 quire.

There were not wanting those in need, ever ready near at
 hand,
 Who them would joyfully receive, to whom they quickly
 did them send.
 Then in apparel decked they out both elegant and good in
 fit,
 As with imperial messengers was verily entirely
 meet.

Permission having been received, these messengers of Etzel
 went
 To where the monarch had his seat; with glances on them
 gladly bent,
 At once Sir Hagen from his place with eagerness toward
 them sprang,
 With friendly phrases them to greet, for which they him
 did warmly thank.

About what tidings they had brought to ask of them he
then began;
How Etzel found himself in health, and also his devoted
men.
To this the fiddler made reply: That land has never
prospered so,
The people never happier were; that may you most surely
know.

He them conducted to the king; the hall was full to its
degree;
The royal envoys welcomed were, as always ought, indeed,
to be
Greeted foreign messengers in another monarch's
land.
The gallant warrior Werbel many with King Gunther
found.

The noble and illustrious king to greet them fervidly be-
gan:
Welcome you two minstrels are, the mighty Etzel's subject
men,
As also your associates. On what affairs you both did
send
Etzel, the illustrious king, within our good Burgundian
land?

They bowed them down before the king. Then remarked
young Werbelein:
To you his services transmits the noblest of all masters
mine;
As doth your sister Kriemhild, too, hither to your fruitful
land.
Us faithful warriors they both in best of faith have hither
sent.

Then answered him the mighty king: At this good news do
I rejoice.

How doth it with King Etzel fare? The noble swordsman
queried thus,

And with my sister Kriemhild, too, in yonder country of
the Huns?

The fiddle-player thus replied: That gladly tell I Uta's
sons.

Not anywhere do monarchs live who greater vigor do
enjoy,

Or happiness, in very truth, than they in all their
majesty,

As well as all their warriors, their kin, and who beneath
them stand.

Our journey every one rejoiced, when we departed from
the land.

Now thank him for the amity that he for me doth thus
display,

My sister, too, as well as him. Glad am I to learn this
day,

That they in happiness exist, the noble monarch and his
men.

My questions truly have been put with some uneasiness
and pain.

At this the younger princes both made their presence there
perceived;

For until now had they the news of these good envoys not
received.

The youthful monarch Geiselher gladly on them both did
look,

For his beloved sister's sake. Then affably to them he
spoke:

You messengers are, all of you, most welcome here to me
and mine;
If you should still more often come to visit us upon the
Rhine,
You ever here good friends will find, who glad to welcome
you will be;
And while among us you remain no cause of sorrow would
you see.

Good we expect to find in you, replied the minstrel Schwem-
melein;
To you I cannot well express with any paltry words of
mine,
What loving greetings unto you King Etzel now by us
hath sent,
And your most noble sister, too, who high in honor there
doth stand.

Of your fidelity and love remindeth you our noble
queen;
And that, within your inmost soul, you ever true to her
have been.
Before all else, respected king, to you we hither have been
sent,
To ask that you the trouble take to go to them in Etzel's
land.

And also he would like to see your brother with you, Prince
Gernot.
Hereby the mighty Etzel asks you all this favor him to
show.
If you not willing are to come your sister's face to look
upon,
He wishes then to be informed what harm he you hath
ever done,

That you in this way him avoid, as well as his domain and throne.
 Did it so happen that to you the queen were foreign and unknown,
 Yet merits he no less than this, that you will journey him to see;
 If you will him this favor grant to him a pleasure it will be.

To this did Gunther thus reply: After seven nights have flown,
 Will I take care that you are told to what decision I have come,
 In consultation with my friends. In the meantime go within
 The quarters at your service placed, and find a needed rest therein.

To this said Werbel in reply: Could it not permitted be
 That we might our illustrious dame, the rich and mighty Uta, see,
 Before we weary warriors within our lodgings seek repose?
 To him with utmost courtesy from Geiselher this answer rose:

That no one shall to you refuse. If you with her some time would bide,
 Thereby will be the will and wish of my dear mother gratified;
 For she will gladly see you both, if only for my sister's sake,
 The estimable Queen Kriemhild. You surely she will welcome make.

Then Geiselher conducted them where he his mother Uta
found;
Who gladly saw the messengers arriving from Hungarian
ground,
And greeted them most graciously, with many a benignant
word.
Thereon the courtly messengers into her ears the tidings
poured.

My lady doth to you commend, remarked the agile
Schwemmelein,
Her service and eternal love; and if the fates may so
incline,
That she more often you could see you may undoubtedly
believe,
From nothing else upon the earth could she such happiness
receive.

Queen Uta thus to him replied: I see not how that well can
be.
However joyfully would I more often my dear daughter
see,
Unhappily the noble queen resides from us too far
away.
May she with Etzel ever live in peace and full pros-
perity.

I wish that you would let me know, before you hence again
depart,
When you are both about to go. Long it seemeth to my
heart,
Since I so gladly messengers have had before me face to
face.
The hardy men with her agreed that so it surely should
take place.

Directly to their lodgings went these envoys from the
Hunnish land.

And meanwhile did the mighty king for kinsmen and
advisers send.

The noble Gunther asked them all, separately, man
by man,

What they about the matter thought. Then many of them
thus began:

That he a fitting thing would do by riding to King Etzel's
land.

Thus argued those the most sincere within his council to be
found.

Sir Hagen was the only one to whom it gave a trace of
grief.

Apart he said unto the king: With your own self you are
in strife.

Forgotten yet you cannot have what we to her have brought
to pass.

In Kriemhild's presence ever must in jeopardy we take our
place.

I made to welter in his blood her husband with my own
right hand:

We surely then can never dare to travel into Etzel's
land.

The mighty king to this replied: My sister's anger dis-
appeared.

With kisses most affectionate before she from this country
fared,

Did she to us forgiveness grant for all that we to her had
done.

If anybody still she doubts, Sir Hagen, you must be the
one.

Now do not let yourself be duped, Lord Hagen said, by anything
The Hunnish messengers may say. If you to Kriemhild
go, my king,
You do it at your honor's risk, as also that of limb and
life.
She well can bear malevolence, can this great monarch
Etsel's wife.

Then said the gallant Prince Gernot to that determined
counsellor:
Without a doubt you reason have of death to harbor
anxious fear,
Within the kingdom of the Huns. Ought we for that the
land to shun,
And our fair sister thus avoid? Wickedly would that
be done.

Then to the cautious warrior remarked the youthful Geisel-
her:
If you, friend Hagen, know yourself such enormous guilt
to bear,
Stay here behind within our land, and guard your health
like other ones;
But do not hinder those who dare from going with us to
the Huns.

Von Tronya Hagen over this in anger then began to
say:
Not any one that you may take as your companions on
the way,
Will with you to the Hunnish court in greater confidence
than I.
Since you will not abandon it, I that will show in
verity.

Rumold, the gallant warrior and master of the kitchen,
said:

Both native-born and strangers can by you at home be
housed and fed,

According to your good desire: for you of means do
nothing lack.

I think that never hath before Sir Hagen tried to hold
you back.

If follow you will Hagen not, then listen to Rumold's
advice,

For I in service unto you am friendly bound beyond all
price,

That you within this country stay, as I you earnestly
desire,

And leave the great King Etzel there, his lovely Kriemhild
to admire.

Wherever on this earth can you so happily reside as
here?

You now can from your enemies protected be without a
fear,

Your bodies with the best attire can ornament and grace-
ful show,

The finest wines can always drink, and many a lovely
maiden woo.

Moreover you are furnished food as good as any on the
earth

A monarch ever can obtain. Good is the country of your
birth.

King Etzel's festival so grand you may with honor set
aside:

And here with your devoted friends in sport and happiness
abide.

And had you not another thing by which your hunger
now to lull,
I always can you give one dish, for aye and ever, to the
full:
Collops fried in good sweet oil. That is what doth Rumold
say;
For there is danger great, my lords, among the Huns so far
away.

The lady Kriemhild never will to you be friendly, I be-
lieve:
For neither you nor Hagen hath deserved such favor to
receive.
And if you do not here remain, who knows what you may
have to rue?
You yet will fully recognize that what I say to you is
true.

I thus advise you here to stay; your land prolific is and
rich.
Here better far can you redeem what you may have to give
in pledge,
Than over there among the Huns. Who knows how will it
there be found?
Continue here, my noble lords; that is Rumold's counsel
sound.

We will not tarry now at home, remarked the hardy Prince
Gernot;
My sister there to yonder land in friendly wise hath bidden
us,
As hath the mighty Etzel, too. What ground have we
for saying nay?
Those who do not wish to go may here for evermore then
stay.

In very truth, then Rumold said, I myself will be the
 one,
 Who unto Etzel's festival will never go across the
 Rhine.
 Why should I in jeopardy place what I have won in
 play?
 I will allow myself to live for all the length of time I
 may.

I also think with you in that, said Ortewein, the hardy
 knight;
 I will our business here at home help to order and keep
 right.
 Then many others of them said they also thither would
 not go.
 May God you all, respected lords, among the Huns His
 favor show.

King Gunther then was very wroth when he was fully made
 aware
 That they desired to stay behind for ease and freedom
 from all care.
 For all of that we'll not desist; we cannot from this
 journey swerve.
 Who acts with reasonable care always will himself pre-
 serve.

In answer then Sir Hagen said: Let not you all to anger
 great
 The language I have uttered move. Whatever now may
 be our fate,
 In honesty I you advise, if you to safety would pre-
 tend,
 That you will only well prepared to Hungary your passage
 wend.

If you this undertaking dare, collected have your fighting men,
The very best that you possess, or anywhere can light upon ;
And out of them will I select a thousand knights of courage good.
Thus may to you not prove to be so dangerous Kriemhilda's mood.

Follow this advice will I, replied the king without a doubt.
Then sent he forth his messengers, in all the country round about.
The heroes soon to him arrived, a full three thousand men or more.
Thinking not so soon to find the great fatigues they later bore.

They travelled over Gunther's land, in hearty mood and merriment ;
And every one was well supplied with horses and habili-ment,
Who, as attendants in their train, would travel into Hungary.
Many famous knights were found, the journey with good will to try.

Thereon Von Tronya Hagen bade his brother, valorous Dankwart,
With eighty of his warriors, across the Rhine to make a start.
In proud array they quickly came, with harness and attire at hand ;
And much thereof was brought by them within King Gunther's spacious land.

Then the hardy Volker came, a noble minstrel at the
court,
With thirty swordsmen of his own upon the journey to
transport.
Magnificent their garments were, a monarch might them
well have worn.
He wished to travel to the Huns, and to the king he this
made known.

Who this musician Volker was to you announce as well I
may,
A nobleman he was by birth; and subject to his lordly
sway
Was many a good and noble knight in that far Burgundian
land.
As he the fiddle well could play, he as the minstrel there
did stand.

Sir Hagen chose a thousand men, who thoroughly to him
were known.
The courage formerly their hands had in the stress of
battle shown,
And what, moreover, they had done, had often come be-
fore his eyes.
Thus everybody must admit their honor and their strength
likewise.

The Queen Kriemhilda's messengers were fretting at their
long delay:
The terror of their master's wrath filled them with a great
dismay;
And each successive day that came petitioned they for
leave to go.
But Hagen that would not permit, wherein he foresight
great did show.

He to his noble master said: We all must take the greatest care
That we do not them let depart till we ourselves can also
fare,
Later seven days at most, into King Etzel's distant
land.
If any one would injure us better chances shall we
stand.

And thus the lady Kriemhild, too, will have no opportunity
To counsel others plans to make for working us an injury.
Such a thing dare she attempt it well may prove to her
a bane,
For we will carry to the Huns many a well-selected
man.

The saddles and the many shields and all the articles of
dress,
That they intended to convey, and into Etzel's kingdom
press,
Were all in readiness prepared for many a brave and noble
man.
And Etzel's minstrel messengers were introduced to Gun-
ther then.

When the envoys had arrived the Prince Gernot began
to say:
With what by you King Etzel asks the king will joy-
fully comply.
Most happy shall we be to come to his grand festival and
rout,
And our beloved sister see; of that she need not have a
doubt.

After him King Gunther said: Are you at all prepared
to say
When this festivity begins, or anything about the
day
When we shall be expected there? To him responded
Schwemmelein:
Upon our next mid-summer day will certainly the feast be-
gin.

Permission then the monarch gave, which had not granted
been as yet,
If they, before they left the land, Brunhilda wished to
see and greet,
That now with his authority they might have speech with
her thereon.
But Volker warmly this opposed: which her to gratify
was done.

My lady Brunhild, I regret, is not to-day so well and
bright
That she can you receive, indeed, replied judiciously the
knight.
If you until the morning wait you her shall be allowed
to see.
They thought in truth to meet her then; it was, however,
not to be.

Commanded then the noble king, and thus the envoys
favor showed
By his own generosity, to hither bring a store of
gold,
Upon some good capacious shields, of which he an abun-
dance had.
Rich presents also unto them by many of his kin were
made.

The lords Gernot and Geiselher, with Garie, too, and Orte-
wein,
Their endless generosity made manifest to every
one.
Such presents of magnificence bestowed they on each mes-
senger,
As neither of them dared to take, for of their master they
had fear.

Then to the noble monarch said the messenger, Sir Werbe-
lein:
Indulgent king, these presents let here within your land
remain.
We cannot with us carry them, for our good master us
forbade
All benefactions to receive; moreover we have little
need.

Thereat the guardian of the Rhine much irritated did
become,
At their so daring to refuse the monarch's gifts to carry
home.
He then compelled them to accept his ruddy gold and
vestments gay;
And these back into Etzel's land they must with them per-
force convey.

Queen Uta now they wished to see ere they homeward
should repair;
And so the minstrel messengers conveyed the youthful
Geiselher
Before his mother at the court. She them desired to tell
the queen,
How all the honors she received her mother had most
gladly seen.

Then bade the good queen dowager her ribbons and her
 gold to share,
 For beautiful Kriemhilda's sake, who was to her extremely
 dear,
 And on account of Etzel, too, between this pair of mes-
 sengers.
 These properly could they receive as deep affection's har-
 bingers.

Now from all had taken leave, from women fair and valiant
 men,
 The lovely Kriemhild's messengers; and joyfully they
 started then
 Toward the adjoining Swabian land. Thus far the noble
 Prince Gernot
 His heroes bade them to escort that harm on them might
 not be brought.

When they who had escorted them turned their backs and
 homeward rode,
 The mighty Etzel's sovereignty secured them peace upon
 the road;
 Whereby did nobody them rob of horse or single piece of
 dress.
 Toward the Hunnish land they went with promptitude and
 eagerness.

Wherever they had any friends the news to them did they
 impart,
 That there, within a little time, the men of Burgundy
 would pass
 In transportation from the Rhine toward the great Hun-
 garian land.
 Unto the bishop Pilgerin did they the tidings also
 send.

As they at last upon the road before Bechlaren made their
way,
To Rudiger they took good care the tidings which they
bore to say,
As well to Lady Gotalind, the good and courteous
margravine.
That they the visitors would see filled them both with
pleasure keen.

Their horses did the minstrels spur, and speedily they
forward ran.
The noble Etzel then they found within his little town of
Gran.
They now imparted to the king what offers to him had
been made,
With greeting upon greeting there; whereat with joy he
colored red.

As soon as to the Queen Kriemhild the grateful tidings
were made known,
That her three brothers had engaged within her land to
travel soon,
With satisfaction was she filled. Her envoys she did well
reward
With many rich and costly gifts, by which she earned a
high regard.

Now tell me, both of you, she said, Werbel and also
Schwemmelein,
Among the very noble asked, which among those friends
of mine
Are coming to the festival which will be held within this
land?
Tell me at once what Hagen said when he the news did
understand.

He to the consultation came quite early in the morn one
 day,
 And very little that was good had he about our news to
 say.
 When others vowed the trip to make to Hungary across
 the Rhine,
 Grim Hagen as the ride of death at once the journey did
 define.

Your brothers certainly will come, the noble sovereigns all
 three,
 In spirits bright and excellent. What others with them
 there may be,
 We were not at the time informed, and are not able you
 to tell.
 The minstrel Volker will be one; that we ascertained full
 well.

Him could I easily excuse, replied to this the noble
 queen.
 Sir Volker at our festival would I much rather not have
 seen.
 To Hagen I am much attached, he is a swordsman brave
 and good;
 That he among us will be seen puts me in the merriest
 mood.

The noble queen proceeded then to where the king himself
 was seen;
 And then with sympathetic words the lady Kriemhild to
 him said:
 How pleases you the news we have, my dearest and devoted
 king?
 What I have always so desired we now will to fruition
 bring.

Your happiness is all my joy, replied the king with hearty
zeal;
If my own kinsmen it had been such true delight could
I not feel,
At having them to visit us here within our glorious
land.
By means of thy dear kindred's love my many cares can I
withstand.

The officers of Etzel's court their workmen ordered all
about,
With seats abundant to adorn the palace and the hall
throughout,
For all the noble visitors who were expected to ar-
rive;
And who soon after would the king of many a higher joy
bereave.

TWENTY - FIFTH ADVENTURE

HOW THE KINGS JOURNEYED TO THE HUNS

HOW they did there themselves demean to you inform
is not worth while.
Warriors so spirited, who travelled in such lordly
style,
Before were never known to come to visit any monarch's land.
They had whatever they could need of arms and raiment
all at hand.

The master of the Rhine equipped of his imperial knightly
host
A thousand and three score of men, as I have heard a
number boast,
Besides nine thousand bold esquires, to go to this grand
festival;
And those they left behind at home thereafter had them
to bewail.

As they across the court at Worms their varied implements
conveyed,
An aged bishop out of Spire, on seeing their employment,
said
To Lady Uta standing by: If our good friends will persevere
In going to this festival may God in mercy guard them
there.

Then said Dame Uta to her sons, the queen so noble and
so good:

I wish that you would here remain, you heroes merry in
your mood.

Last night I had a fearful dream of dire calamity and
dread;

That all the birds within the land were stricken with
disease, and dead.

Who doth himself with dreams concern, responded Hagen,
angrily,

Is wanting in intelligence, and cannot any way
espy

How he may in a fitting way respect for truth and honor
show.

I hope that now my noble lords with leave to Etzel's court
will go.

Gladly shall we ride away into great King Etzel's
land;

Our monarchs may the service need of many a hero's
sturdy hand,

As very likely we shall see at fair Kriemhilda's fes-
tival.

The journey Hagen now advised; he later found it
to his grief.

Thereto he would have been opposed but for Gernot's
mockery,

Who had with bitter, stinging words accused him of gross
treachery.

Of Siegfried he reminded him, the husband of the Queen
Kriemhild.

For this is Hagen not, he said, to this long journey recon-
ciled.

Von Tronya Hagen then replied: 'Tis not from fear that
thus I do.

If you, my heroes, thus command, then act, and with deci-
sion go.

Gladly I will with you ride into King Etzel's distant
land.

There soon were many a helm and shield cut to pieces by
his hand.

Prepared the ships already stood to carry them across the
Rhine.

What of apparel they required they carried down and
stowed therein.

A plenty there they found to do to busy them till even-
tide,

Then family and home they left, and off in best of spirits
hied.

They put up tents and canopies upon a grassy plain
they found

Upon the river's farther shore, which used they now as
camping-ground.

Earnestly did Gunther's wife beg him behind with her
to stay;

She had from him her last embrace as she that night
beside him lay.

The sound of clarion and flute rang out upon the morning
air,

Their setting out to signalize; and all was soon made
ready there.

Fond lovers in each other's arms lingered in a last em-
brace,

For many through King Etzel's wife their steps would
nevermore retrace.

The fair Queen Uta's noble sons had in their company a
man
Who honest and courageous was. When their departure
they began,
He secretly informed the king what on his mind so heavy
lay.
I must regret, he said, that you upon this journey will
away.

This faithful man was named Rumold, a warrior of great
renown.
To whom will you, he said, commit the people and the
land you own?
Alas, that none can you induce, warriors, to change your
mind!
The message that Kriemhilda sent I never good for you
could find.

My land I will to thee confide, as also mine own little
son;
So serve the women faithfully; thus I desire it to be
done.
To those whom you may see in tears true pity and com-
passion show.
Kriemhilda there, the noble queen, no harm to us will ever
do.

Before departure hence was made the noble king a council
held
Of all his most exalted men. He would not go so far
afield,
And unprotected leave his land. To represent his sov-
ereign might,
He left behind him when he went many a brave and valiant
knight.

The horses stood in readiness for all these lords and
retinue.

With kisses of affection strong bade many a man his fond
adieu,

Whose soul and body were inflamed with courage of the
highest kind.

By many a woman wofully were they soon after much
bemoaned.

Of weeping and distressful cries could plenty over all be
heard.

Upon her arm the lovely queen their infant carried to her
lord.

How can you now us both at once make orphans for the
rest of life?

For love of us remain at home, said the monarch's sorrow-
ing wife.

Pray do not weep, beloved wife, for any firm intent of
mine;

Here without a care you ought in best of spirits to re-
main.

Soon shall we be back again, enjoying fully health and
power.

Thus they parted from their friends with loving words
that very hour.

As all these warriors were seen to on their horses quickly
spring,

Was many a woman standing there her hands in sorrow
seen to wring.

That they had bid a last adieu their deepest feelings seemed
to tell.

The apprehension of distress doth no one make light-
hearted feel.

When the swift Burgundians began upon their march to
go,
In all the land there now appeared tremendous hurrying
to and fro.
On either margin of the Rhine men and women wept and
prayed.
However might the folk lament a start in merry mood
they made.

The heroes of the Nibelungs with them upon the march
did fare,
A thousand with habergeons on, who had within good homes
now there
Full many a lovely woman left, whom they did never see
again.
The noble Siegfried's injuries yet gave Kriemhilda bitter
pain.

Weak in those far distant days religion was among this
class;
A chaplain, notwithstanding this, intoned for them a daily
mass.
In safety he came home again, although from peril great
he fled.
The others to a man remained within the land of Hungary
dead.

The men of Gunther's company directly shaped their on-
ward course,
Toward the waters of the Main, and hence East Frankland
went across.
Sir Hagen acted as their guide, for thoroughly he knew
the way;
Their marshal was the bold Dankwart, the warrior from
Burgundy.

As they from out of East Frankland by Schwannenfeld
 were riding seen,
 Might everybody know them well by their superb and
 stately mien,
 The princes and exalted friends, heroes worth our wor-
 shipping;
 And the twelfth day from setting out upon the Danube
 saw the king.

Von Tronya Hagen always rode well ahead of all the
 rest.
 Toward the Nibelung host true helper was he when dis-
 trest.
 Quick the valiant swordsman sprang down upon the pebbly
 ground,
 And with celerity his horse securely to a tree he
 bound.

He found the water very high and not a vessel was
 in sight;
 Whereby were all the Nibelungs brought into a most sorry
 plight;
 They knew not how to get across, as wide the river there
 they found.
 Here many a celebrated knight swung himself toward the
 ground.

Evil, Hagen then remarked, may happen in this place to
 thee,
 Noble monarch of the Rhine, as canst thyself distinctly
 see.
 The river is extremely high, its current is intensely
 strong;
 I apprehend that we may lose many a warrior
 ere long.

What is it, Hagen, you assert? responded then the noble
king.
By every virtue you possess no more alarms before us
bring.
Go and try to find the ford whereby a passage one can
make,
That we across in safety may our horses and apparel
take.

I have not yet, quoth Hagen then, so weary of my life
become,
That I am ready to be drowned beneath the waters of
this stream.
By my hand, ere that arrives, shall many a man his death-
blow find,
Within King Etzel's vast domain; better that will suit
my mind.

Ye gallant and intrepid knights, remain you by the water-
side,
And I will go my way to find the ferryman who knows the
tide,
And over will us safely bring into the mighty Gelfrat's
land.
Then the sturdy Hagen seized his solid shield within his
hand.

Provided well with arms was he, his buckler on his arm he
bore;
Firmly laced his helmet was and brightly shone upon the
shore.
Above his shining coat of mail was slung a sabre very
broad,
And horrid wounds with edges both could make the formid-
able sword.

Hither and thither well he sought a navigator of the
stream.

A rustle in the tide he heard, and listened with attention
keen.

This was by some mermaids done, who in a fine and limpid
pool

In bathing then were occupied, their lovely bodies there
to cool.

When Hagen of them caught a sight did he toward them
softly glide.

Swiftly swam they off in haste when they the hero there
espied.

That they from him had so escaped afforded them ex-
ceeding joy.

Away with him their clothes he took, but further did them
not annoy.

One of these fair water-nymphs, entitled Hadberg, to him
said:

Sir Hagen, celebrated knight, before you shall the news
be laid,

If in return for what we say our clothes to give us you
agree,

Of what you all upon this trip among the Huns shall live
to see.

Like birds they floated here and there, suspended lightly
on the flood.

Their knowledge of important things he fancied might
perhaps be good.

So much the sooner he believed whatever they to him
might say.

They spoke concerning everything for which desire he did
display.

Safely may you ride, she said, into the great King Etzel's land.

For that my faith I pledge to you, on that security I stand.

Within a foreign prince's land have heroes never been received

With honor and esteem so great. This may firmly be believed.

Hagen in his heart rejoiced at what he heard the mermaid say ;

And so their raiment he returned without a moment of delay.

And not till they had fully donned their most wonderful attire,

Truthfully did they him tell how he in Etzel's land would fare.

Then said to him the other nymph, who had of Siegelind the name :

Hagen, truly I thee warn, Aldrian's son of sterling fame.

My aunt because of her attire hath said what cannot be believed.

If thou among the Huns arrive, fully wilt thou be deceived.

Back return again while yet the opportunity is seen,

Because you gallant heroes all have hither so invited been

That you to die may be compelled, in the spacious Hunnen land.

Whoever thither makes his way will soon discover death at hand.

Von Tronya Hagen then replied: For your deceit I see
no need.

How can it ever come to pass that I and my companions
all

Shall at this festival be killed through anybody's secret
hate?

Then gave they to the warrior their information full and
straight.

To this did one of them reply: It verily will so ob-
tain.

Not one of your whole company will ever see his home
again,

Except the chaplain of the king. All this we fully under-
stand;

He alone will safely come back again to Gunther's
land.

In anger uncontrollable Hagen thereupon re-
plied:

Not very easy would it be to my good masters to con-
fide

That we in yonder Hungary our bodies all must leave
behind.

Now pilot us across the stream, thou cunningest of woman-
kind.

Since, she said, it so must be, and on this journey thou wilt
go,

Know that higher up the stream a little cot itself will
show.

Therein resides a ferryman, and nowhere else, or far or
near.

Further questions there to ask he hurried off in better
cheer.

To this indignant warrior the other thereupon did
call:

A moment, good Sir Hagen, wait; you with impatience
are too full.

Ere you go, receive the news how you will fare across
the land.

The lord commander of this march is Elsa, you must un-
derstand.

He a brother Gelfrat has, a hero of uncommon
might,

A noble of Bavaria. You will not find the matter
light,

If you attempt to cross his march. Also look you to it
well

That with the aged ferryman you with utmost caution
deal.

He is in humor so morose you never with him can suc-
ceed,

Unless you do judiciously to the hero state your
need.

If he shall ferry you across do not to pay him hesi-
tate.

He is guardian of the land and high in favor with Gel-
frat.

If not at once he come to you shout to him across the
flood,

Saying you are Almerich. He was a swordsman bold and
good,

Who because of enemies the country was compelled to
leave.

Surely will the boatman come if you this name to him
shall give.

Then Hagen in his arrogance thanked the women
loftily,
For their monition and advice; but not another word did
say.
Then went he to the river edge and upward walked along
the strand,
Until upon the other side the promised boatman's cot he
found.

Loudly then began to call the warrior across the
flood.
Now fetch me over, ferryman, shouted out the swordsman
good;
And I will give you as reward a bracelet of the finest
gold;
That I the river get across to me is needful, now be
told.

The ferryman was very rich, needing not to serve for
pay;
And seldom did he recompense from anybody take
away.
The men he had in his employ were also of a haughty
mood;
So Hagen yet expectant stood alone on this side of the
flood.

He then began to shout so loud that all the river did
resound,
By reason of the hero's voice, so full and lusty it was
found:
Me, Almerich, convey across; for I am he, Lord Elsa's
man,
Who had through animosity away from this good land
to run.

High overhead upon his sword toward him he the gem
did hold,
Looking fair and beautiful as glistened there its shining
gold,
That he would him convey across over into Gelfrat's
land.
The ferryman so arrogant himself took oar within his
hand.

This ferryman, you now must know, was notably quite
covetous.
Intense desire for opulence at last will surely lead to
loss.
The gold that Hagen offered him he thought to gain as
his reward,
Yet from the hero underwent a horrid death now by his
sword.

The ferryman pulled lustily across toward the hither
shore;
And when he him detected not whose name he heard awhile
before,
Infuriated he became. When Hagen he at length
espied,
With fierce impetuosity he to the gallant hero
said:

Perhaps it is that you are known by the name of Alme-
rich,
Yet if you resemble him I have made a great mis-
take.
By father and by mother, both, my brother he is known
to be;
And seeing you have me deceived you upon this side
may stay.

For love of God Almighty, no, Hagen answered in despair.

A foreign warrior am I, with other swordsmen in my care;

So amity toward me show by taking of my ruddy gold,

And rowing us across the stream; thus you my gratitude will hold.

Then further said the ferryman: That indeed can never be;

For my beloved masters have many a bitter enemy.

I therefore never will convey a stranger over to their land.

If life for you have any charm step you at once upon the strand.

That, said Hagen, I will not; extremely sad am I at heart.

Take as a little gift, I pray, this golden bracelet and depart

Across with us a thousand horse, and also just as many men.

Then said the angry ferryman: That never will by me be done.

Saying this he raised an oar of heavy make and very strong,

And Hagen gave so hard a blow (for which he sorry was ere long),

That down below within the ship he stumbled forward on his knee.

So furious a ferryman did he of Tronya never see.

Still further to exasperate the stranger whom he did not
know,
He swung his oar so lustily that it completely broke in
two
Upon the luckless Hagen's head; he was indeed a power-
ful man.
Thereby did Elsa's ferryman serious damage soon ob-
tain.

With anger burning in his heart took Hagen instantly in
hand
The scabbard hanging at his side, wherein his sword he
quickly found.
He then cut off the boatman's head and cast it out upon
the shore.
Soon the news of what was done the bold Burgundians had
in store.

At the selfsame point of time when he the crusty boatman
slew,
The current carried off the ship, at which he very angry
grew.
Before he could it right again to feel exhaustion he be-
gan.
Yet heftily he plied the oar, King Gunther's overhasty
man.

He did his best to come about, with many a quick, spas-
modic stroke,
Until the strong and heavy oar within his hand asunder
broke.
He wished toward the warriors upon the shore to turn
it round,
But nothing further had for use. He quickly it together
bound,

With his buckler's handy thong, a long and narrow leather band.

Finally toward a wood then he brought the vessel round;

There he soon his masters found, waiting for him on the bank;

And many swordsmen speedily ran to meet him and him thank.

Most heartily saluted him the noble knights as there they stood;

Looking then within the ship, they saw the fresh and steaming blood,

From the grim, terrific wound by which the ferryman he slew;

Concerning which was he compelled much questioning to listen to.

Soon as Gunther, horrified, saw the hot and seething blood,

Swaying in the rocking boat, he queried in an angry mood:

What, Sir Hagen, has become of your commander in the skiff?

Possibly your ample powers have ways contrived to take his life.

Hagen answered with a lie: When I the little vessel found,

Moored beside a meadow wild, I it with my own hand unbound.

No ferryman, indeed, have I this morning here set eyes upon;

To nobody at all by me hath any injury been done.

Then he of Burgundy remarked, the brave and gallant
King Gernot:
I fear to-day I cause shall have grief for many a death
to show,
Since we can here no ferryman upon this swollen river
see.
How we shall ever get across is what most greatly troubles
me.

Loud Sir Hagen then exclaimed: Lay upon the green-
sward there,
You varlets, all our equipage. In former times did men
declare
That I as good a boatman was as could upon the Rhine
be found.
I will you safely over bring and land you there on Gelfrat's
ground.

That they with more celerity might forward get across the
flood,
First they drove the horses in. In swimming was their
skill so good,
That out of all not even one did e'er the rapid stream
engulf;
A few were down the river drawn who by fatigue were
overcome.

Down they carried to the ship of goods and arms the
whole array;
As now it necessary was the trip no longer to
delay.
Hagen over steered the boat, and landed safely on the
strand
Many a handsome warrior, in that unknown, mysterious
land.

First conducted he across a thousand knights of good
 repute,
 And his three score of warriors; then more of them took
 he in suit;
 Nine thousand serving-men he brought safely over to
 that land.
 All day a stranger to repose was bold Von Tronya Hagen's
 hand.

The boat was of enormous length, very strong and also
 wide;
 Five hundred of their men or more could easily within it
 ride,
 Besides the necessary food, and all their weapons, o'er the
 flood.
 That day did many a noble knight the oar impel with
 ardor good.

As he the well-descended ones across the river deftly
 brought,
 Upon the strange, prophetic news the nimble hero sadly
 thought,
 That him the untamed water-nymphs had so explicitly
 made known;
 For which the chaplain of the king was very nearly made
 to drown.

Among the sacred implements the servant of the Lord was
 found,
 Who by the holy relics stood, and rested on them with his
 hand.
 Uneasy he began to feel when Hagen on him set his
 eyes.
 Unlucky and ill-fated priest, much harm for him did there
 arise.

Suddenly with awful force he overturned him from the boat.

Then many to him loud exclaimed: Halt, Von Tronya Hagen, halt!

The gallant young Sir Geiselher stormily to swear began;

He would, however, not desist till injury to him was done.

After him put in a word the prince of Burgundy, Gernot:

What good, Sir Hagen, will to us by the chaplain's death be brought?

If any other this had done sorrow over him should steal.

What hath done the holy man to make you thus against him feel?

Powerfully the chaplain swam, hoping yet he might get out,

If only some one would him help; but that could not be brought about,

For Hagen with his utmost strength, so sanguinary was his mood,

Pushed him under once again; but none regarded this as good.

When the poor forsaken priest saw that he would get no aid,

Turned he round toward the shore, and weariness did him pervade.

Though able longer not to swim, yet aided him the Father's hand,

And he at last in safety got back again upon the strand.

There the poor unfortunate stood, shaking forcibly his clothes.

Thereby did Hagen recognize that unto him had solemn truths

Been by the mermaids open laid; and he with sorrow true was filled.

These swordsmen all, considered he, are fated to be early killed.

When the vessel was discharged, and emptied out upon the shore

Were all the personal effects the monarch's soldiers with them bore,

Hagen broke the vessel up and scattered it upon the flood;

At which were utterly amazed the warriors renowned and good.

Brother, why dost thou do that? Dankwart questioned in dismay.

However shall we get across upon our happy homeward way,

When we do out of Hungary again return toward the Rhine?

Sir Hagen, later, said to him that never would they hence return.

But at that time the hero said: I did it with deliberate thought.

If we a cowardly poltroon can here within this land have brought,

Who us is willing to desert, by fury or vexation stirred,

Underneath these waves will he have a shameful death incurred.

Within their company was one, a gallant hero of re-
nown,
From out of Burgundy who came, and was by name of
Volker known.
He often spake in mockery, according to his daring
mood,
And whatsoever Hagen did, considered this musician
good.

When then the chaplain of the king the ruin of the boat
espied,
Across the water he called out to Hagen on the other
side:
Most base and faithless murderer, to you what have I ever
done
That me, an unpolluted priest, you in heart desire to
drown?

As answer Hagen to him said: To all your talking put
a stop.
It sorely troubles me, indeed, that you have managed to
escape
In liberty out of my hands; no doubt of that need you
to raise.
The poor, forsaken priest replied: For that I God will
ever praise.

But little now do I you fear, to that you may yourself
resign.
Depart you off to Hungary and I will go toward the
Rhine.
May God permit you nevermore the river Rhine to see
alive!
That I wish with all my heart, for you against my life
did strive.

Shouted then King Gunther out to his good chaplain all
alone:

I surely will you recompense for what Sir Hagen may
have done

To you in his ferocity, if ever I shall reach the
Rhine

In life and energy again. Without a fear may you re-
main.

Now hasten you toward your home, for so of need it now
must be.

And unto my beloved wife the best of greetings take from
me,

As also to my other friends; and to them all be sure to
tell

The welcome and refreshing news that we are all proceed-
ing well.

The horses stood in readiness, the sumpters fully laden
were.

Upon their expedition yet had they not anything to
fear,

Or give to them a tinge of pain, except the chaplain's
episode,

Who toward the Rhine again on foot was forced to seek
the road.

TWENTY - SIXTH ADVENTURE

HOW DANKWART SLEW GELFRAT

AS soon as every one of them had from the vessel
gone ashore,
Then the monarch Gunther asked: Who in this land shall
go before,
To lead us in the proper road, that we our way may not
mistake?
The bold, intrepid Volker said: Let me that office under-
take.

Now stay a moment, Hagen said, be it squire or be it
knight,
Let follow every one his friends; that to me is what seems
right.
Some heavy and important news have I to make you
understand.
We none of us shall ever tread again upon Burgundian
land.

The sirens made it known to me this morn about the rise of
sun,
That we shall ne'er see home again. Now this I counsel to
be done:
Ye heroes, arm you every one, and keep you all a good
lookout.
Mighty foes we soon shall meet, and weaponless must not
start out.

The mermaids' doleful prophecies I hoped a lie might prove
to be.
They told me that not one of us would ever be allowed to
see
The country of his birth again except the chaplain of the
king.
And that is why for him to-day a speedy death I tried to
bring.

Like the wind these tidings flew along the line from band
to band,
Until with terror pale became many swordsmen bold and
grand,
As heavy care upon them seized, in thinking of a cruel
death
Connected with the festival. It almost took away their
breath.

Across the river they had gone near the town of Moe-
ringen;
And here had Elsa's ferryman within his little ship been
slain.
Then further still did Hagen speak: Since I unhappily
have won
Some enemies upon the way, we surely shall be set
upon.

I killed the ferryman myself this morning early in the
boat,
As now is doubtless fully known. Be sure the means then
to promote,
Whereby if Elsa and Gelfrat shall try to harass here
to-day
Our company as we proceed, turn badly out for them it
may.

I know that they are brave enough and this assuredly
will do.

On this account the horses let without much pressure on-
ward go,

That none have reason to suppose that from their host
we try to flee.

With this advice, said Geiselher, I think it best that we
agree.

Who now shall show our company the way to follow in
this land?

That, said they, shall Volker do. He hath surely well in
hand

Open roads and byways, too, the proud and skilful fiddle-
man.

Ere this of him had been desired in arms before them
could be seen

The ever ready minstrel knight. His helmet on his head
was worn;

Magnificent in tone and hue was all his service uni-
form.

He had upon his lance's shaft a floating signal that was
red.

The kings and he soon after came into most distressing
need.

Reliable and certain news Gelfrat had by this re-
ceived,

Relating to the boatman's death. And Elsa also was
aggrieved

About the same intelligence; to both it was a bitter
grief,

And now they for their heroes sent, who soon assembled
in relief.

Thereon within a little time, now pray my statement do
not shun,
Riding up to them appeared to whom the evil had been
done,
In all the panoply of war, a gallant and unyielding
host;
Seven hundred, if not more, to Gelfrat aid were at their
post.

When these sturdy enemies quickly them began to
chase,
The masters who conducted them hurried forward on
apace,
To overtake the hardy guests. Stern revenge they meant
to have.
Afterward were they compelled friends to put within the
grave.

Von Tronya Hagen by this time had his matters so ar-
ranged,
And better leader, probably, could not for him have been
exchanged,
That he and those in his command in the rear their places
take
With his brother Dankwart there. Therein he no mistake
did make.

Already had the daylight fled, able were they not to
see.
Of dangers he was much afraid that his friends might
threatening be.
Under shelter of their shields went they through Bavarian
land.
Thereafter in a little while assaulted were they hand to
hand.

Both right and left upon the road, also close upon the rear,
A clattering of hoofs was heard; and rapidly the host drew near.
Then the hardy Dankwart said: They will attack us in a trice,
So firmly fix your helmets on; to me is that the best advice.

Here they halted in the march, as needful was it to be done.
Then they in the darkness saw the gleaming bucklers as they shone.
No longer still could Hagen keep; in his impatient mood he said:
Who follows us along the road? And Gelfrat thus to him replied.

Thus said to him the margrave bold out from the Bavarian land:
We're looking for our enemies, whom we follow to withstand.
I know not who it was to-day that slew my trusty ferryman.
He was a valiant warrior, and of his loss I now complain.

Von Tronya Hagen then replied: Belonged the ferryman to thee?
He would not us conduct across. The fault entirely rests on me.
The one who slew the man was I; and of a truth I was compelled;
For I from that good swordsman's hands came to being nearly killed.

I offered him as recompense gold and silver and attire,
 If he, Sir Knight, would ferry us over to your land for hire.
 Thereat so angry he became as me to strike upon the head
 With his immensely heavy car; and I in turn grew very wroth.

Then hastily I drew my sword and warded off his violence;
 And then he got the ghastly wound whereof he died for his offence.
 Now here I stand to answer you in any way that seemeth good.
 The combat fiercely then began, for each was in a wrathful mood.

I knew, said Gelfrat, very well, when hither with his followers
 Passed the monarch Gunther by, would cause arise for grief and tears,
 From Hagen's hasty arrogance. Now shall he relinquish breath,
 And good security shall give for my devoted boatman's death.

Over shield the spear was fixed in preparation for attack,
 By Hagen and Gelfrat alike, of whom did neither fury lack;
 The brave Dankwart and Elsa, too, at one another fiercely rode,
 Thereby testing who they were. The strife was furious in mode.

Braver than these warriors fought how could a hero ever
do?

Backward Hagen seemed to sink beneath a most terrific
blow,

Off the horse whereon he rode, by Gelfrat's persevering
hand.

Asunder did his poitral break. His foeman was a fighter
grand.

Among the followers of each was heard the sound of break-
ing lance.

Himself recovered Hagen soon from the fall that by mis-
chance

He had upon the grass received from his irate opponent's
spear.

Fierce the anger then became that to Gelfrat he did
bear.

Who it was their horses held never did I under-
stand.

Out of saddle both were thrust, and now were down upon
the sand

Hagen and Gelfraten both, and at each other quick did
run.

Then their men assistance brought soon as this to them
was known.

Ferociously as Hagen sprang upon Gelfraten in the
feud,

A portion full an ell in length the brave and noble mar-
grave hewed

Away from off his buckler's edge; the fire from the im-
pact flew.

There did noble Gunther's man to life bid almost his
adieu.

To Dankwart now, with upraised voice, to call for succor
 he began:

Brother, come; I need your aid; an active and a powerful
 man

Holdeth me upon this spot, and soon will have the best
 of me.

The hardy Dankwart then replied: I umpire will between
 you be.

Nearer sprang that warrior and dealt him such a heavy
 blow,

With his keenly sharpened sword, that he was soon in death
 laid low.

Elsa now revenge would have for the man who thus was
 killed;

Yet he and all his followers retired with loss from off
 the field.

His brother was already slain; he had too a fearful
 wound.

Fully eighty of his men were also left upon the
 ground,

A prey to unrelenting death. Then the hero was com-
 pelled

By the men of Gunther's band hastily to fly the
 field.

While the brave Bavarians themselves were taking fast
 away,

Fearful and terrific blows could yet be heard amid the
 fray.

Then the men of Tronya chased their quickly disappearing
 foe;

And who did not pay up his scot had little room himself to
 show.

Then to the pursuers said the swordsman Dankwart in
dismay:
Let us now again turn round and backward try to make
our way;
And them permit to wander off. With blood our enemies
are wet.
We now will hasten to our friends. Faithfully I counsel
that.

When again they found the place where the combat had
been fought,
Von Tronya Hagen thus remarked: My heroes, let us
now find out
Who among us missing are, and whom we have already
lost,
In this encounter we have had, by Gelfrat's angry will
enforced.

Four was the number they had lost in this unfortunate
affray;
But fully were they all avenged; upon the other side there
lay
Of those from out Bavaria upward of one hundred
dead.
Then the men of Tronya found their bucklers soiled with
blood and red.

Dimly glimmered out of cloud the queen of heaven's
sombre light;
And Hagen then observed again: Attend, I wish that none
to-night
Shall my dear master notify, what with us hath taken
place.
Until the morning come again let no care disturb his
peace.

When toward them now approached those emerging from
the strife,
Then the rank and file were found grumbling from fatigue
and grief.
How long in this way must we ride? questioned many a
noble man.
Thereto the hardy Dankwart said: No lodging find out
here we can.

You all must in the saddle keep until we see the light of
day.
Volker then, the active knight, who led the troop upon its
way,
Bade them of the marshal ask: Where to-night do you
design
To let our weary horses rest, also these dear masters
mine?

Dankwart thus replied to this: I cannot that precisely
say;
We dare not any rest procure until the early dawn of
day.
Wherever then ourselves we find we upon the grass will
lie.
When they this information heard it seemed a great calam-
ity.

Without their having noticed it with reeking blood were
they all red,
Until the monarch of the day within his flaming chariot
sped
Above the hills to greet the morn. Then the king dis-
tinctly saw
That they had been engaged in strife. He said, in tone
commanding awe:

What, friend Hagen, hath occurred? Do you then utterly
d disdain
The help I able was to bring when they your harness so
did stain
Recently with human blood? By whom to you hath this
been done?
That did Elsa, he replied. Last night against us he was
thrown.

By reason of his ferryman he fell upon us with his
band.
The mighty Gelfrat has been slain by my devoted brother's
hand.
Elsa had at last to flee, impelled thereto by utmost
need.
They lost in strife a hundred men, while only four of ours
are dead.

We cannot you exactly tell where nightly rest they after
found.
Intelligence was soon abroad, among the country people
round,
That lovely Uta's gallant sons were going to the
festival.
A good reception they obtained at Passau in the in-
terval.

The uncle of the noble kings, the worthy bishop Pil-
gerin,
Uncommonly delighted was to have these monarchs of his
kin,
With such a host of warriors, visiting within the
land.
That he them very gladly saw did they quickly under-
stand.

Deservingly were they received by many friends along the road.

All could not provided be at Passau with a night's abode.

Across the water they must go; and room upon a plain was found.

Huts and tents were quickly up, wherein they rested on the ground.

Here they had to stay for rest until had fled a day entire,

And the after-night as well, receiving there the best of cheer.

Thence they started gaily off toward the land of Rudiger,

On whom the news of their approach did happiness indeed confer.

When the travel-weary men had found a night's refreshing rest,

And to the long expected land had so nearly homeward pressed,

Upon the march, as they advanced, they came upon a sleeping man,

From whom Von Tronya Hagen then a strong and mighty weapon won.

As Eckewart was widely known this hardy and intrepid knight,

Who over this strange incident discovered was in sorry plight,

At losing of his weapon thus, by heroes marching on the ground.

The border-lands of Rudiger were very badly guarded found.

Woe is me for this disgrace! exclaimed in grief Sir Eckewart;
The trip of these Burgundians bringeth heaviness of heart.
Since I my gallant Siegfried lost only sorrow have I known.
Oh, misery, Lord Rudiger, what harm to thee I now have done!

Hagen heard this sad complaint; he saw the noble warrior's need,
And gave him back his trusty sword, with half a dozen bracelets red.
Take them, hero, as reward, and ever as a friend me own;
A swordsman valorous art thou to lie out here on guard alone.

May God, replied Sir Eckewart, amply you for this reward.
Still bitterly must I regret that you the Huns have come toward.
You my gallant Siegfried slew; here are you yet held in hate.
Very watchful be while here; I earnestly advise you that.

In God we trust for our defence, said Hagen to him in reply.
No other care of any kind have the swordsmen here with me,
Than fitting lodgings now to find the princes and their retinue,
Where to-night within this land we may with rest our strength renew.

Our horses are entirely fagged, for we so far have had to ride;
Our provender is at an end; the warrior Hagen further said:
Nothing can we find to buy; a host is now our greatest need,
Who us to-day of his good-will will us and our good horses feed.

Then answered him Sir Eckewart: To such a host I will you lead,
As none will you within his house greet so well with word and deed,
Anywhere within the land, as here to you will come about,
If your intrepid warriors will Rudiger but now search out.

That host resides upon this road, the very best in every part,
Who ever did a house possess. The virtues all adorn his heart,
Like the grass bedecked with flowers in the smiling month of May;
And if but heroes he can serve he always happy is and gay.

King Gunther then of him inquired: Will you from me an envoy be,
If us accommodation give until appears the light of day,
Can my friend, Sir Rudiger, and those who travel with me here?
For that I will him ever serve in every way within my power.

Your messenger, said Eckewart, most gladly I consent to
be.
And with the utmost eagerness with his commission started
he,
To make then known to Rudiger what now by him may be
believed;
By him had not for a long time such gladsome tidings been
received.

Up toward Bechlaren's gates was seen a swordsman fast to
ride,
Who well to Rudiger was known. Along the road, he said
aside,
Comes Eckewart in furious haste, of Queen Kriemhilda's
vassals one.
He thought, as was but natural, that harm to him his
foes had done.

Then to the outer gate he went, finding there the messen-
ger,
Who from its belt removed his sword and put it down beside
him near.
Then said he to the warrior: What to you has been made
known,
That you to haste are thus impelled? Hath any us a
mischief done?

No harm to us hath any done, said Eckewart, with breath
near spent.
By three illustrious sovereigns thus have I to you been
sent;
Gunther, King of Burgundy, with Geiselher and brave
Gernot.
Each of these good warriors to you his services hath
brought.

The same Sir Hagen also doth, to whom joined must
Volker be,
With zeal and true fidelity. I now will let you further
see
What, by the marshal of the king, I have been bidden you
to say ;
These famous warriors have need of your good hospital-
ity.

With countenance suffused with smiles answered then Sir
Rudiger :
Good news to me indeed it is that these illustrious kings
are here,
And of my services have need. To them shall nothing be
denied.
If within my house they come I full shall be of joy and
pride.

Dankwart, marshal to the kings, wishes too that you should
hear
Who to you within your home, to-day moreover, will draw
near.
Sixty valiant warriors, and full a thousand cav-
aliers,
With ninety hundred bold esquires. This the margrave
gladly hears.

Rejoiced am I to see these guests, replied the courtly
Rudiger.
Now these noble warriors will me within my castle
cheer,
To whom I but infrequently have any service ever
done.
Let us all to meet them forth, my kin and liegemen, every
one.

Off to horse they hastened all, every squire as well as knight;

All their master might command by every one was held as right,

Whereby so much the readier were they to yield their services.

Dame Gotalind yet nothing knew, for she within her chamber was.

TWENTY - SEVENTH ADVENTURE

HOW THEY CAME TO BECHLAREN

THEN the margrave went at once the women of the
house to seek,
His consort and his daughter fair. These acquainted did
he make
With the interesting news that he himself had just re-
ceived,
That all the brothers of the queen soon would at the house
arrive.

Dear and well-beloved wife, remarked to her Lord Rudi-
ger,
Royally must you receive the noble kings arriving
here,
When they and all their retinue in the yard before you
stand.
You affably must also greet Sir Hagen in the king's
command.

Hither with them also comes one by name of Dankwart
known;
Another one is Volker called, a man of worship and re-
nown.
Now, my wife and daughter, you with kisses must the six
embrace,
And friendly to these warriors be with utmost courtesy
and grace.

The women promised so to do, nor was it needful them to
press.
From their wardrobes they withdrew many a rich and
costly dress,
In which the noble warriors outward forth to go and
greet.
Then with these fair women was excitement up at
fever-heat.

Of counterfeit embellishment among these women none was
found.
Each upon her shapely head wore a shining golden
band,
Looking like a stately wreath, in order that their lovely
hair
Might the wind not disarrange. They all were delicate
and fair.

In occupation such as this at present let these women
be.
Of rapid riding to and fro about the plain was much to
see
Among the friends of Rudiger, until the princes they had
found.
Splendidly were they received here upon the margrave's
ground.

When the margrave them observed up toward him drawing
near,
Did Rudiger, the nimble one, call in tones distinct and
clear:
To me, my lords, you welcome are, as well as all your
retinue,
Here within my land and home gladly you do I now
view.

Thanks to him the warriors said with truth wherein no hate
did rest.

That he was glad to see them there he made in all ways
manifest.

He Hagen special greeting gave, as he to him had long
been known,

The same to Volker, too, he did, the Rhenish minstrel of
renown.

He also Dankwart greeted well. Then said that noble
warrior:

Here if you for us provide, who will undertake the
care

Of all the men who with us came away from Worms upon
the Rhine?

The margrave then began to say: Concerning that all
care decline.

All of those attending you, and everything that you have
brought

Hither with you to this land, guarded shall be with such
thought,

Whether silver, horse, or dress, that of it nothing shall
be lost;

You no harm shall suffer here, not e'en half a farthing's
cost.

Go earnestly to work, ye men; pitch your tents upon the
plain;

If anything you here shall miss the loss I fully will sus-
tain.

The bridles then at once remove and let the horses freely
go.

Before had they but seldom been by any host entreated
so.

Delighted were the visitors. As soon as this had taken
place,
And ridden had their masters off, the underlings began
apace
To tumble down upon the grass; there to find such wel-
come rest
As never yet upon their trip had they enjoyed with so
much zest.

Then hastened the good margravine within the castle yard
to go,
Her lovely daughter at her side. Themselves with her
did also show
The stately women of the house, as well as many a charm-
ing maid,
Who wore the best of jewels fine and richest raiment to be
had.

The costliest of precious stones shed their radiance far and
wide
From their magnificent attire. Much beauty did in them
reside.
Then came along the visitors, springing down upon the
ground;
Grace and courtesy extreme with these Burgundians were
found.

Of maidens fully thirty-six, with many a dame in
union,
Lovely as could be desired and a delight to look
upon,
Went forth to meet the noble lords with many an intrepid
man.
A hearty welcome and sincere was from the gracious
women won.

With kisses did the margravine salute the noble kings,
all three;
Her daughter also did the same. Hagen stood not far
away,
And him her father bade to kiss. A glance by her was at
him thrown,
When he appeared so terrible this she would rather not
have done.

But she in duty had to do exactly as her father
said.
Color changed her countenance, in turns becoming pale
and red.
She also hardy Dankwart kissed, and after him the fiddle-
man;
For mighty strength and bravery did he so fair a greet-
ing gain.

The younger, lovely margravine took by the hand with
dignity
The generous young Geiselher, the warrior of Bur-
gundy.
This also did her mother do to Gunther, noble king and
man.
With these heroes then advanced both with joyful steps
within.

The host conducted then Gernot into a grand and spacious
hall,
Where the ladies and the knights seats occupied together
all.
This being done, the best of wine commanded Gunther out
to pour;
And entertained with better cheer heroes never were be-
fore.

With tender and enraptured eyes many a brave and noble
knight
On Rudiger's fair daughter looked; for made was she
to give delight.
Many felt within their hearts love toward her mount-
ing high.
This homage she well merited, for beauty's self did she
outvie.

Whatever their desires might be they knew could not ful-
filment see.
Knights enraptured might be seen right and left about
to spy
At maiden fair and stately dame, of whom were many
to adore.
Well disposed toward the host himself the noble fiddler
bore.

Separated then they were, as was the custom of the
land;
And to the various chambers went knights and ladies
out of hand.
Now the tables were arranged for dining in the great
saloon;
Unto the foreign visitors willing service then was
done.

To show good feeling to the guests the fair and noble
margravine
At table with them took her place. Her daughter she had
let remain
Behind with her attendant maids, where by custom she
would stay.
Longer not the maid to see made many a guest to grieve
that day.

After they to eat and drink had enough for each
 and all,
 The lovely damsels were again before them led into the
 hall.
 Of tender words among the men certainly there was no
 lack,
 And Volker, that undaunted knight, plenty of them found
 to speak.

With utmost freedom then observed this very hardy fiddle-
 man:
 Margrave, most rich and powerful, God by you hath freely
 done
 According to his highest grace. A noble and a beauteous
 wife
 In mercy hath he given you, as well as a most happy
 life.

If only I were now a king, further said the fiddle-
 man,
 Having right a crown to wear, select as consort would
 I then
 Your lovely daughter over all; her to win would be my
 mood,
 So fair is she to look upon; withal so noble and so
 good.

Retorted then the margrave thus: How, peradventure,
 could it be,
 That any king could ever wish his queen my daughter
 dear to see?
 We both of us are exiles here, I and my devoted
 wife,
 Having nought to give away, and beauty's sway is very
 brief.

Gernot thus to him replied, the warrior without reproach:

Should I myself select a wife, my ideal to approach,

To such a woman would my heart be ever true and amorous.

Hagen then did somewhat add, with fair and courteous address:

To marry is it now full time for my young master, Geiseler;

And in so high a lineage the lovely margravine doth share,

That we are willing her to serve, I and all my gallant men,

If she with us Burgundians beneath the crown be ever seen.

Every word that had been said thought the margrave very good,

As also did fair Gotalind; they felt in gay and joyous mood.

Then all the heroes so contrived that he, the noble Geiseler,

Made her on the spot his wife, in which no shame could he incur.

Whatever right and proper be, who shall opposition make?

Bidden was the maiden now herself unto the court to take.

Then given under solemn oath to him the lovely damsel was;

Whereupon he promise gave to cherish her while life he had.

Upon the maiden were bestowed citadels and also
land,
Then confirmed it by an oath the noble king upon
his hand ;
And the swordsman Gernot, too, that so it was to come
about.
Then the gallant margrave said: As I of castles am
without,

I can but in fidelity myself to you forever
hold.
Unto my daughter I will give as much of silver as of
gold,
As a hundred sumpter mules upon their backs away
can take ;
That, with honor and esteem, this content you heroes
make.

Then together were the two at once within a circle
placed,
As by custom was ordained. Many a hero at the
feast
Stood before them face to face in a most delighted
mood.
Within himself no doubt each thought just as now a young
man would.

So soon as they began to ask the lovable and winning
maid
If she would wed the warrior, she appeared a little
sad ;
She, however, willing seemed to take the brave and gallant
one.
Her the question somewhat shamed, as many a maiden it
hath done.

Her father, Rudiger, advised her to answer with a
yes,
And to take him cheerfully. Then quickly forward did he
press,
And now, indeed, with his white hands clasp her warmly to
his heart,
Geiselher the youthful prince. How quickly yet they had
to part!

The margrave then began to say: Noble kings, when you
ordain,
When again you forth will ride home toward your rich
domain,
The maiden will I give to you, as most fitting then will
be,
That you may her with you conduct. To this did every
one agree.

Then the shouting that was heard was at present bidden
cease.
The maiden also was allowed toward her chamber now to
pass,
As, too, the visitors, to sleep and gain repose until the
day.
Food was then for them prepared; well did he his care
display.

When they had fully breakfasted and hence were ready
to depart
To the country of the Huns, tried the margrave that to
thwart.
Against it I protest, he said; longer here should you
remain;
Guests so welcome unto me for^r long, indeed, have I
not seen.

Dankwart thus to him replied: A longer stay must we
decline,
For where are you to get the meats, or the bread, as well
as wine,
That would necessary be such a company to
feed?
The host on hearing this then said: Of such vain words
there is no need.

Dear and most respected lords, you must not my desire
despise;
I well can give to every one the needed food for fourteen
days,
You and all the followers that hither with you you did
bring.
King Etzel very seldom hath from me demanded any-
thing.

Resist, however, as they might, compelled were they there
to remain
Until the fourth glad morning came. Then to happen well
was seen,
By the landlord's tenderness, what known became both far
and near;
Unto his visitors he gave both splendid horses and at-
tire.

Longer could it not endure, for they must hasten to their
goal.
Of his possessions Rudiger willing seemed to give the
whole,
In his great generosity. Whatever any might de-
sire,
Was him by nobody denied; with everybody he would
share.

The servants of the noble lords forward led before the
door
Many gaily-saddled steeds. Assembled with them had
before
Foreign warriors not a few, all of them with shield in
hand;
Who in preparation were to ride with them to Etzel's
land.

The host an offer made of gifts to every man within his
call,
Ere any of his honored guests had yet arrived before the
hall.
With honor was he able well to live in almost regal
mode.
He had his lovely daughter now upon Sir Geiselher be-
stowed.

Next he unto Gernot gave a weapon good as e'er he
saw,
That later on in bloody strife trustily the swordsman
bore.
Nor envied him this offering the noble margrave's lovely
wife;
That very weapon yet it was that Rudiger deprived
of life.

Then he unto Gunther gave, the hero far beyond
compare,
What with honor could accept the noble king of fame so
fair,
Though he seldom gifts received, a suit of armor very
grand.
Then the king himself inclined before the generous Rud-
ger's hand.

To Hagen offered Gotalind, as fitting by her to be
 done,
 A friendly present from herself. As Gunther had accepted
 one,
 Also would Sir Hagen not to this festivity now
 speed,
 Without an offering from her; still the noble hero
 said:

Of all the things I ever saw, Sir Hagen unto her re-
 plied,
 Is nothing I so much desire to take away when hence I
 ride,
 As the shield that I perceive hanging yonder on the
 wall,
 To bear with me to Hungary; that I covet above
 all.

When the words that Hagen spake the margravine had
 fully heard,
 She of grief so minded was that to weeping she was
 stirred.
 With suffering unbearable of Nudung's sudden death she
 thought;
 Who by Whittig had been slain. This lamentation to her
 brought.

Unto the warrior she said: Into your hands the shield I
 give.
 Would that God in heaven had him permitted still to
 live,
 Who so nobly once it bore! He his life in combat
 lost.
 For him my tears must ever flow, for me such misery it
 cost.

Then arose from off her seat the margravine, so sad and mild,
With her white and shapely hands took she down the treasured shield,
And it to Hagen carrying, into his own hands transferred.
With utmost honor was the gift upon the warrior conferred.

A covering of shining stuff on its blazoned surface lay.
On any better shield than this never shone the light of day.
With gems of such magnificence was its surface richly wrought,
That in the market easily would it a thousand marks have brought.

Hence the shield to take away commanded now the warrior.
Then his brother Dankwart came, whom also to the court he bore.
To him of sumptuous attire a good supply gave Rudger's child,
In which thereafter with the Huns he merrily his time beguiled.

However many were the gifts that they in general took home,
Not any would into their hands of all the lot have ever come,
But for affection of the host, who given them so freely had.
Soon were they such foes to him that they had to strike him dead.

With his fiddle forward now the hero Volker swiftly
paced,
Who before Dame Gotalind himself with courtly bearing
placed.
Tunes thereon he sweetly played, and in addition sang his
lay.
Leave therewith he grateful took, and from Bechlaren made
his way.

Then the gracious margravine had a coffer nearer
brought,
Of friendly and expensive gifts, which I will tell you now
about.
A dozen rings now took she out and put upon the fiddler's
hand.
All these, Volker, shall you take with you into the Hunnen
land,

And from love to me and mine at the court shall always
wear;
That when hither you return enabled shall I be to
hear
What services you rendered me while at this great fes-
tivity.
As she had bidden him to do, so did the swordsman faith-
fully.

To his guests then said the host: That safer hence you all
may go,
I myself will you conduct. You thus will preparation
show,
And be by none upon the road at all molested or
waylaid.
On the sumpter horses, then, all their various goods were
laid.

Ready was the host to go, and with him full five hundred
men,
With horses and accoutrements. They in a body started
then
Toward the royal festival, in happy and delighted
mood.
To Bechlaren again returned none of all those soldiers
good.

With kisses to his wife and child thence did Rudiger de-
part;
And thus did also Geiselher, prompted by his loving
heart.
The women fondly they caressed with tender kiss and close
embrace.
For them would many maidens soon have to wail with tear-
ful face.

All about on every hand the windows open wide were
seen,
As with his band of gallant men the margrave went with
face serene.
In heart they truly must have felt trouble in advance
uplaid.
Thereover many a woman wept, as well as many a lovely
maid.

For many fondly cherished friends they sorrow bore and
grievous pain,
Whom they within Bechlaren's gates would never look upon
again.
Yet rode they out with joyous hearts down below upon the
strand,
Along the river Danube's vale, until they reached the
Hunnen land.

Then spake to the Burgundians that margrave of be-
 nignant sway,
 The brave and noble Rudiger: Longer should we not
 delay
 To send the news by messengers, that we to Hungary draw
 near.
 Intelligence of better kind could nobody to Etzel
 bear.

Many a rapid messenger over Austria was
 thrown,
 And soon it was on every hand by all the people fully
 known,
 That heroes were upon the road from distant Worms upon
 the Rhine.
 To all the servants of the king could better tidings not in-
 cline.

The envoys made the greatest haste to carry the important
 word,
 By many of the Nibelungs the Hunnen land would soon
 be stirred.
 Kriemhilda in a window stood, gracious and illustrious
 queen,
 And looked upon her relatives, as friend by friend was
 passing seen.

Coming from her native land saw she many a valiant
 man:
 Also learned the king the news, and greatly to rejoice be-
 gan.
 Gladly now you must them greet, Queen Kriemhild, within
 your home.
 To render honor unto you have your brothers hither
 come.

When this daughter of a king had these tidings learned,
 tho' late,
 In part plucked she from her heart her sorrow, which was
 very great.
 From her father's native land came many men to her well
 known,
 By whom the monarch Etzel soon fearful grief and sorrow
 won.

Well for me is this dear joy! when she saw them, said
 Kriemhild.
 In their hands transmit my friends many a new and unused
 shield,
 As also shining coat of mail. He who will accept my
 gold,
 And bear in mind my awful wrong, him friendly will I
 ever hold.

Secretly in heart she thought: Now anything may come
 to pass
 To him who me of all my joy so thoroughly divested
 has.
 Can I bring it so about, no evil thing shall he be
 spared
 At this glorious festival; for that I fully am pre-
 pared.

The matter so will I contrive that vengeance now success
 shall see,
 At this renowned festivity, whatever afterward may
 be;
 Upon his body that I hate, who me did formerly
 bereave
 Entirely of my happiness, I now shall satisfaction
 have.

TWENTY - EIGHTH ADVENTURE

HOW KRIEMHILD RECEIVED HAGEN

WHEN all of these Burgundians had well arrived
within the land,
Thereof was made aware at Berne the aged master Hilde-
brand,
Who told it to his sovereign. Dietrich could thereat but
grieve.
The company of hardy knights he ordered him to well
receive.

The sturdy Wolfhart then desired horses forward to be
brought.
Then with mighty Dietrich rode many a swordsman of re-
pute,
A greeting to extend to them as they arrived upon the
plain.
Erected had they in the place many a grand pavil-
ion.

When them Von Tronya Hagen saw, as in the distance yet
they sped,
He with deferential grace at once unto his masters
said:
Now dismount you from your seats, warriors, to greeting
give,
And on foot advance to meet those who you would here
receive.

Yonder comes a troop of men; known to me is all the
band;
Many a swordsman brave there is from the Amelungen-
land.
He of Berne is at their head; courage high do they sus-
tain.
The homage they may offer you do not in any wise dis-
dain.

From their horses quickly sprang, in accord with ancient
right,
To the ground with Dieterich many a squire as well as
knight.
They went toward the visitors, where the heroes they had
found,
Greeting in a friendly way those from off Burgundian
ground.

When the noble Dietrich them coming up toward him
saw,
He thereat was very glad, yet did grief within him
gnaw.
What expected was he knew, thus their journey gave him
pain.
He supposed that Rudger knew, and to them had all made
plain.

Welcome here you are, my lords, Gunther and Prince
Geiselher,
Lord Gernot, and Hagen, too; Volker also doth it
share,
As also Dankwart, agile knight. Do you not fully under-
stand
That bemoans Kriemhilda yet him from the Nibelungen-
land?

Awhile still longer may she weep, thereto Von Tronya
Hagen said.

Many a year the man has lain already smitten down and
dead.

The monarch of the Huns ought she rather now in heart
to have;

Siegfried nevermore will come; he hath long been in his
grave.

Of Siegfried and his injuries let us longer not dis-
course;

While the Lady Kriemhild lives evil she will fain en-
force.

Thus answered him the lord of Berne, the illustrious
Dieterich:

Comfort of the Nibelungs, to guard yourself is
truly fit.

Why should I be on my guard? queried then the noble
king.

Etzel sent us messengers; more could I wish any-
thing?

Asking hither us to come, and ourselves to him pre-
sent;

Also many messages to me my sister Kriemhild
sent.

Earnestly do I advise, Hagen further to them
said,

To have this grave intelligence now before you fully
spread,

By the noble Dieterich and his gallant heroes
good,

That now fully you may know all about Kriemhilda's
mood.

Then aside the three withdrew, there among themselves to
speak,
Gunther and the brave Gernot, as well as mighty Diete-
rich.
Plainly out before us say, thou illustrious knight of
Berne,
All of what thou mayest know how Kriemhilda's mood doth
turn.

The governor of Berne replied: What can I to you
declare,
Save that every morning I in tears and lamentation
hear
Etzel's wife, the fair Kriemhild, warmly pray with every
breath,
Almighty God in heaven above to avenge her Siegfried's
death.

It is impossible to change, said the brave and hardy
man,
The minstrel Volker, aught of that which to us you now
make known.
Let us therefore go to court, and our minds make up to
face
Whatever to us warriors may among the Huns take
place.

Then these brave Burgundians went within the court to
stand;
In their grandeur they advanced in the custom of their
land.
When they arrived among the Huns would many bold, in-
trepid men
Von Tronya Hagen look upon, for he among them fame
had won.

From common hearsay and report did the people understand
 That he it was who had destroyed Siegfried of the Netherland,
 The boldest of all warriors, husband of the Queen Kriemhild.
 Thus of Hagen at the court was much wondering speech
 now held.

That hero was a well-grown man, that at least may one
 declare;
 Broad of shoulder and of chest; while intermingled with
 his hair
 Streaks of grisly tint were seen. His legs were long and
 very straight,
 And terrible his countenance; he had withal a lordly
 gait.

Then a lodging was prepared for each Burgundian noble
 guest;
 The men of Gunther's retinue lay separated from the
 rest,
 Following the queen's advice, who to him did hate re-
 tain.
 Soon thereafter were these men in their quarters foully
 slain.

Hagen's brother, Dankwart bold, office of the marshal
 bare.
 The mighty king his retinue well commended to
 his care,
 To see that fully unto them meat and drink were both
 supplied.
 This task did willingly perform that warrior and faithful
 guide.

The beautiful Kriemhilda made with her retinue a
 start,
 To where the Nibelungen guests she welcomed with de-
 ceitful heart.
 Her brother Geiselher she kissed and took him gaily by
 the hand.
 When this Von Tronya Hagen saw, faster on his helm he
 bound.

After a greeting such as this, Hagen said with dis-
 respect,
 It well for agile swordsmen is upon the matter to
 reflect.
 Different kinds of greeting here princes and the subjects
 get.
 No good journey have we made in order at this feast
 to meet.

Let, she said, receive you well those who you with gladness
 see.
 On account of friendliness you no greeting get from
 me.
 Tell me what for me you bring out of Worms upon
 the Rhine,
 That any pleasure I should feel to see you in this home of
 mine.

What is this that now I hear, to her said Hagen in re-
 ply,
 Presents ought to bring to you swordsmen who to you
 draw nigh?
 Rich as ever I might be, such a thing had I but
 thought,
 Surely I a gift to you would among the Huns have
 brought.

Now still further I will ask concerning matters to you known.

The treasure of the Nibelungs, what by you with that was done?

That was my own property, as very well you understand;

Wherefore it you should have brought with you into Etzel's land.

Lady Kriemhild, in all truth, passed hath many a weary day,

Since the Nibelungen hoard I put from any ken away.

My honored masters ordered me deep to sink it in the Rhine;

And there indeed, to end of time, it is likely to remain.

The angry queen to this replied: I so imagined long before;

Little have you brought to me hither of that royal store;

Though it all belonged to me, and formerly was in my care.

For it and for its master's sake many a day with grief I share.

The devil to you I have brought, Hagen said in sentence gruff;

What with this good shield of mine have I to carry quite enough,

And my heavy coat of mail, as well as helmet shining bright;

The sword I carry at my side; to you have I conveyed it not.

By what I said I did not mean that I was longing after
gold;
So much have I to give away that gifts I care not to
behold.
A murder and a double theft, by which you once my heart
did wring,
For these would I, sad woman, see you some satisfaction
bring.

Said this daughter of a king to the warriors grouped
there:
No one any weapon shall within the palace with him
bear;
Entrust, my heroes, them to me; guarded safely shall they
be.
In truth, said Hagen yet again, I never such a thing will
see.

The honor I do not desire, tender-hearted Queen Kriem-
hild,
In your custody that you carry off my trusty
shield,
And other implements of war; for here the rank of queen
you bear.
My father taught me long ago to keep them ever in my
care.

Oh, misery for this regret! answered then the Queen
Kriemhild;
Hagen, and my brother too, why do they not give the
shield,
And let me have it in my care? Some one hath sent a
warning breath.
Only knew I who it was, he for it soon should suffer
death.

Dietrich soon an answer gave, as one whom anger strong sustains:

I am he who warning gave to these most worthy sovereigns;

Hagen I inspired as well, the valorous Burgundian man.

Devil's bride, now do thy worst; do to me no harm you can.

Great confusion covered now the noble and illustrious queen.

She stood in almost abject fear of Dieterich's heroic spleen.

All at once she left the place without another word to say;

But cast a rapid, ugly glance on the foes who there did stay.

Then each other by the hand took two warriors much unlike;

One Von Tronya Hagen was, the other mighty Dieterich.

Then in tones of courtesy said the latter in words brief:

Your coming here among the Huns is to me a source of grief,

Since that daughter of a king spoken hath to you in spite.

Then Von Tronya Hagen said: Everything will yet come right.

Thus to one another spoke the warriors upon the plain.

This the monarch Etzel saw; then to question he began.

I very much should like to know, said the king in tones
of care,
Who the warrior may be that by the noble Dietrich
there
So amicably is received; he bears himself in lofty
mood.
Whatever be his father's name he well may be a warrior
good.

An answer to the king then gave one of fair Kriemhilda's
men:
At Tronya first he saw the light, his father's name was
Aldrian.
However mild he seemeth now, yet is he most fiercely
bold;
Presently I will you show that I no lie to you have
told.

How am I to ascertain that he so grim and
awful is?
Not at all was he aware of the traps and wicked-
ness
That against her dearest friends had the queen so well
contrived,
So that from the Hunnen land none to make his exit
lived.

Hagen very well I know; he once a subject was of
mine.
Reverence and honor high when he was here he nobly
won.
I created him a knight and gave him plenty of my
gold.
As he true and faithful was from him I nothing did
withhold.

Everything of Hagen, then, thoroughly I understand.

I two noble children brought as hostages into this land,

Him and Walther out of Spain. To men they grew upon this ground;

Hagen sent I home again; Walther fled with Hildgund.

Thus he mused on olden times and what therein had taken place.

His friend from Tronya here again had he now survived to face,

Who in his youthful days to him had valuable service done;

Yet by whom in riper years many friends were overthrown.

TWENTY - NINTH ADVENTURE

HOW HAGEN AND VOLKER SAT BEFORE KRIEMHILDA'S HALL

FROM one another went apart these two noble warriors,
Von Tronya Hagen, that bold knight, and the noble Dieterich.
Backward o'er his shoulder glanced Gunther's hardy vassalman,
To seek a trusty comrade out, whom he to himself soon won.

Close beside young Geiselher saw he Volker stand below,
The minstrel of consummate art. Him he asked with him to go,
Because to him was fully known his determined fighting mood.
He in all his qualities was a knight both brave and good.

Yet alone these lords were left standing in the court below.
Entirely by themselves were seen the two away from there to go,
A distance off across the court, before a palace broad and high.
The brave and chosen warriors at no one's strife were ever shy.

Down they sat before the house on a bench both low and
strong,
Opposite a spacious hall which to Kriemhild did be-
long.
The lordly armor that they wore on their bodies fairly
shone;
And not a few who saw it would to them gladly have been
known.

As if wild animals they were did many a bold and daring
Hun
The overweening heroes there stare with open mouths
upon.
At a window them observed the noble Etzel's lovely
queen.
Thus was the fair Kriemhilda's heart with vexation torn
again.

Thinking of her former grief shed she many a bitter
tear.
Wondered then the warriors that in King Etzel's service
were,
What could now so have disturbed, suddenly, her joyous
mood.
Hagen is the cause, she said, ye heroes brave and also
good.

Then to the lady they replied: How hath this all come
about?
But a little while ago we saw you merry in your
thought.
However bold the man may be who you hath any evil
done,
Tell us to avenge the deed; life will soon from him be
gone.

To whom my sorrow will avenge my hearty thanks will ever
 flow;
 And anything that he desires shall I be ready to be-
 stow.
 At your feet myself I throw. Further said the monarch's
 wife:
 On Hagen but avenge my wrong, so that he may lose his
 life.

Then these men took up their arms, numbering about three
 score.
 Through affection for Kriemhild would they go the hall
 before,
 Death to Hagen there to deal, the valorous, intrepid
 man,
 As well as to the fiddleman. In accord all this was
 done.

When, indeed, so small a troop the queen in all her sorrow
 saw,
 In irritation great she said to the heroes her be-
 fore:
 From such audacity as this I hope that you will disen-
 gage;
 So few in number dare you not hostilities with Hagen
 wage.

Valorous and powerful as may the Tronyan hero
 be,
 Yet by far more vigorous is he, who sitting by, you
 see,
 Volker, the noted fiddleman; a man is he of wicked
 might.
 You these heroes must not dare, so few of you, to go to
 fight.

When these words of hers they heard, did four hundred
warriors more
Put themselves in coats of mail. On the queen lay very
sore
All the burden of her heart and avenging of her
wrong.
The warriors together came in sorry straits ere it was
long.

When she this intrepid host all prepared and armed had
seen,
To those active warriors said the fair and lovely
queen:
Tarry yet a little while and here without a motion
stand.
With crown upon my head will I upon these enemies
attend.

Listen while I him reproach with what he unto me hath
done,
Hagen, who from Tronya comes, noble Gunther's sub-
ject one.
I know that he too haughty is a lie upon his tongue to
call.
Thus I nothing will inquire what may later him be-
fall.

Then the minstrel messenger, a fiddleman of courage
rare,
Saw this daughter of a king down the staircase drawing
near,
That outward from the palace led. When he saw her
coming close,
To his associate in arms said the hardy Volker
thus:

Look, friend Hagen, now, and see how toward us she doth
come,
Who with no true fidelity hath us invited to her
home.
I never saw with any queen so many men in all my
life,
Fully armed, with sword in hand, make approach prepared
for strife.

Know you not, friend Hagen, well, that unto you they
hatred bear?
You fervently do I advise to guard yourself with zealous
care,
Both your honor and your life; that to me appeareth
good.
So far as I can ascertain they all are in an angry
mood.

Among them are there many men broad of chest and
mighty, too;
If his life would any guard that should he in season
do.
They I see beneath their silk solid suits of armor
wear;
What thereby they have in mind, that I no one hear de-
clare.

Then in anger and chagrin Hagen said, the hardy
man:
I know as fully as may be that because of me
alone,
All of these intrepid men bear their weapons now in
hand;
For them all I yet will ride back to the Burgundian
land.

Now, friend Volker, tell me then, purpose you by me to
stay,
If with me in combat strive those in Queen Kriemhilda's
pay?
That now let me understand if in love you hold me
true.
And I with services in turn will ever firmly stand by
you.

Assuredly I will you aid, the gallant Volker then re-
plied;
If against us I should see, with all his army at his
side,
The mighty Etzel coming on, so long as I my life
may keep,
From your side I will not stray a single footbreadth out of
fear.

God of heaven you reward, beloved Volker, noble
sire;
If at my side you fighting are, whatever more can I de-
sire?
Since you to me assistance bring, as I have heard you now
proclaim,
Should these doughty warriors cautiously much nearer
come.

Let us from our seats arise, then the noble fiddler
said,
Before the daughter of a king, if by us she pass
ahead.
At least this honor let us show the beautiful and noble
queen,
And that itself to both of us respect and deference will
win.

If any love for me you have, let that alone, Sir Hagen
said.

The doughty warriors might then easily to think be
led

That I in fear had acted so, and had it in my mind to
flee.

I do not from my place intend for any one of them to
stray.

To me it more befitting seems that we omit this cour-
tesy.

Should I offer this respect to one who hatred bears to
me?

Nay, I never will it do as long as I in life may
be.

What care I in all the world about Kriemhilda's en-
mity?

The too courageous Hagen laid across his knees without
a care

A weapon very sharp and bright, on whose hilt did then
appear

A jasper with a lustrous hue, greener than the very
grass;

And well Kriemhilda recognized that Siegfried did it once
possess.

Soon as she the sword perceived came her trouble to a
head.

Constructed was the hilt of gold, as also was its scabbard
red.

Reminded was she of her woe, and freely thus to weep
began.

I believe to compass this Hagen had the action
done.

Volker, minstrel unappalled, nearer drew upon the
 seat
 His long and mighty fiddlebow, very strong and very
 great;
 Fashioned was it like a sword, exceeding sharp and broad
 'twas made.
 Thus these ready warriors sat together un-
 afraid.

These two swordsmen sitting there so in self-esteem did
 soar,
 That from fear of any one were they determined never-
 more
 From their chosen seat to rise. Then along before their
 feet
 Passed that daughter of a king, and unfriendly did them
 greet.

Hagen, tell me pray, she said, who to you a bidding
 sent,
 That hither you presume to come, and in this land your-
 self present,
 Knowing, as you well must do, what you to me have ever
 done?
 If you in your senses were you had surely better
 known.

Nobody for me hath sent, retorted he without re-
 morse;
 To travel here within this land invited me three war-
 riors,
 Whom I noble masters call, and whose servitor I
 am.
 At festivities like these never leave they me at
 home.

Tell me further, then she said, why you ever did this thing,
Whereby my hatred you have earned, and on you it justly bring?
You it was who Siegfried slew, and have from me my husband torn;
Whom until the end of life never can I cease to mourn.

Why further talk? he then replied. Already you enough have said.
I in truth that Hagen am who your Siegfried slew indeed,
That swordsman of ability. How costly was the recompense
For the words that Dame Kriemhild to Brunhilda did dispense!

I also will you not deny, omnipotent and noble queen,
That I of all your injuries, alone, have ever guilty been.
Avenge them now whoever will, be it woman, be it man,
Never will I to you lie. I much harm to you have done.

Warriors, you hear, she said, he himself avows the cause
Of all the grief that I endure. What punishment thereby he draws
I will never ask about, ye men of Etzel, bearing lance!
The bold and haughty warriors at one another gave a glance.

Then had they begun to fight, clearly would it have been
 seen
 How these brave associates knew their honor to main-
 tain;
 As in battle's strife and stress they before had often
 done.
 What the Huns would undertake fear impelled them now
 to shun.

Of those warriors one now spake: Why upon me glance you
 so?
 What I promised heretofore at present I decline to
 do.
 I for no one's gifts incline now to jeopardize my
 life.
 We shall here misguided be by mighty Etzel's angry
 wife.

Another in his turn remarked: So I also feel in
 mood.
 Should anybody give to me golden towers red and
 good,
 With this fiddle-player I into combat will not
 go;
 Like I not the furtive looks I have seen him here be-
 stow.

I this Hagen also know; we in youth together
 played,
 With him as a warrior I close acquaintance also
 made.
 In two and twenty bitter fights I his boldness oft have
 seen.
 Many a woman through him, too, troubled in her soul hath
 been.

He, with him who came from Spain, many devious paths
did tread,
Wherein, when they with Etzel dwelt, did they many a
hardy deed
From affection for our king. That I often did be-
hold;
Thus from Hagen may one not ample honor now with-
hold.

Nothing then the warrior was but a child in point of
years.
Those who then were merely boys are, as then, devoid of
fears.
To discretion he has come, and is a grim, ferocious
man.
Also carries he Balmung, which by evil deeds he
won.

Here they tacitly agreed that none should enter into
strife.
Then the daughter of a king in her heart was sore in
grief.
Now the warriors went their ways, death desiring to
avoid
At the stalwart heroes' hands; good discretion they em-
ployed.

Often will faint-hearted men from a valorous deed ab-
stain,
When will friend beside a friend firmly stand and victory
gain.
And if one that prudence have that he will not in this way
act,
He from harm will oft be spared, by his watchful care,
intact.

Then the hardy Volker said: Now to us is clearly
 shown,
 That enemies we here shall find as already made us
 known.
 So let us hasten to the court, by our noble masters'
 side,
 That with them shall no one dare in any conflict to be
 tried.

Good, I you will follow there, Hagen said, and did with-
 draw.
 Then together went the two where the warriors
 they saw
 Waiting their reception still in the courtyard of the
 house.
 Volker then, the hardy knight, spoke at once in strident
 voice.

To his masters he exclaimed: How long thus will you here
 stand,
 And yourselves let jostled be? You attention should
 demand.
 From the king you then may hear what he now intends to
 do.
 They together thereon joined, the noble heroes, two
 by two.

The gallant Dieterich of Berne took amicably by the
 hand
 Gunther, the illustrious king of the vast Burgundian
 land.
 Irnfried took the brave Gernot, the hardy and intrepid
 man;
 And with the father of his wife Prince Geiselher to start
 began.

However in this forward march together come the couples
might,
Volker and Hagen had resolved that they would never
separate;
And in but a single fight ever parted were they
known;
Which to many a woman was a cause of sorrow to
bemoan.

With the noble kings was seen, up advancing to the
court,
Of their gallant followers a thousand men of bravest
sort;
Moreover, sixty warriors were seen proceeding at their
head,
Whom from out of his own land the doughty Hagen hither
led.

Hawart, and Sir Iring, too, swordsmen both of choicest
kind,
With the kings set out for court, all together, hand in
hand.
Dankwart then, and Wolfhart too, a swordsman good
and strong as well,
Who in esteem and courtesy all the rest did much
excel.

As the master of the Rhine within the palace made his
way,
Did Etzel, great and glorious king, any longer not
delay;
Up he sprang from off his seat soon as he him com-
ing saw.
Greeting warmer of its kind never was with kings
before.

Welcome you, Lord Gunther, are, whom to come I so
 besought,
 And your brother Geiselher, as is also Lord Ger-
 not,
 With greeting and true services from yonder Worms upon
 the Rhine.
 All the swordsmen with you, too, shall from me a welcome
 find.

Welcome surely also are your two noted warriors
 both,
 The hardy Volker of renown, to whom Lord Hagen add,
 forsooth.
 My wife and I are glad to see every one within this
 land.
 Many a message to the Rhine kindly she for you did
 send.

To this Von Tronya Hagen said: Already this to us is
 known.
 If upon my lord's account to Hungary I had not
 come,
 Yet to show respect to you should I have ridden to this
 land.
 Then the noble king his guests took with ardor by the
 hand,

Leading them toward the bench whereupon himself had sat.
 Then were offered to the guests (industriously done was
 that)
 In large goblets made of gold, hydromel, morass,¹ and
 wine.
 Knew the foreign warriors now welcome warm did them
 entwine.

¹ Cognate with the Anglo-Saxon "morán," "morn," a mulberry.

Said the monarch Etzel then: Truly can I you assure,
Nothing at this time to me could more happiness secure,
Than that you, ye warriors, hither came to be received.
Thus will certainly the queen from all sorrow be relieved.

Ever have I been at loss to ascertain what I had done,
Since of noble visitors I so many here have won,
That you have never deigned to come me to visit in my land.
Now at last to see you here satisfies my heart's demand.

Then responded Rudiger, a warrior of noble heart:
Gladly may you them receive; their fidelity is great.
The brothers of my mistress are worthy of your high esteem.
To you they bring within your house many swords of skill extreme.

On a warm midsummer eve all these visitors were shown
To Etzel's court, the mighty king. Seldom was it ever known
For his guests that any king had such friendliness contrived.
Afterward to table went he with all who had arrived.

A host for his illustrious guests more fully never did provide.

With all that they could eat and drink they plentifully were supplied.

Whatsoever they desired was upon them soon conferred.

About these heroes of repute had things wonderful been heard.

Etzel, rich and mighty king, a spacious edifice had reared,

With industry and labor great; money had he never spared.

Palaces and towers were seen, wherein were chambers numberless,

Within a spacious citadel, which did a lordly hall possess.

The whole he ordered to be built very long and high and wide,

For him so many warriors at all seasons visited.

Without his other retinue, a dozen kings of mighty power,

And many swordsmen of repute at all times had he present, more

Than ever had obtained a king that has before come to my ken.

He managed thus to spend his time in merriment with friends and men.

Crowds immense and shouts of joy to the king were ever brought,

By many a stalwart warrior, whereby himself he mighty thought.

THIRTIETH ADVENTURE

HOW HAGEN AND VOLKER KEPT WATCH

TO its close the day had come, the shades of night were drawing near;
The travel-weary warriors then most anxious were to hear
Where they might find a resting-place, and at last to bed could go.
Then kind inquiry Hagen made as soon as he their wishes knew.

Gunther to their host now said: God grant you happily to live!
We much would like to have our sleep, if leave to go you will us give;
Then, if you bid us, we will come at early morning, as is best.
Right gladly now the host his guests parted from that they might rest.

From every side now crowding in everywhere the guests were seen.
Volker, with a few bold words, said to the Huns in accents keen:
How dare you, when we wish to pass, in this way get before our feet?
If you from this do not desist, some injury perhaps you'll meet.

One or other I will strike so hard with my good fiddle-
bow,
That if he have a trusty friend he may weep for him, I
trow.
Now back before us, warriors; in truth ye cannot better
do.
Swordsmen are ye all in name, yet no courage can ye
show.

When in anger and chagrin thus exclaimed the fiddle-
man,
Hagen, that intrepid knight, to cast his eyes about
began.
The hardy minstrel you, he said, gives some excellent ad-
vice;
All of you, Kriemhilda's men, go to your lodgings in a
trice.

What you at present have in mind hardly will you bring
to pass.
Would you anything begin, to-morrow morning come to
us;
Let us travel-weary knights this one night in peace re-
pose.
I think that you will never find readier men with you to
close.

The visitors were taken then within a fine and spacious
hall,
Where for rest had been set up for the warriors one and
all,
Costly and luxurious beds, very long and also
wide.
Thus Kriemhilda joyfully did for them much woe pro-
vide.

Decorated coverlets which came from Arras there were
seen,
Made of light and shining stuffs; also many a counter-
pane
Formed of fine Arabian silk, beautiful as could be
found,
Adorned with laces all of gold, throwing shining rays
around.

Also on the beds were laid many sheets of ermine
bright,
And of sable, black in hue, under which to pass the
night,
And repose in luxury until the dawning light of
day.
A king with all his trusty men in nobler fashion never
lay.

A curse upon this night's abode, said the youthful Geisel-
her;
And woe for all my trusty friends who with us these quar-
ters share.
However well my sister meant in asking us on her to
wait,
We, I fear, shall nothing gain but death by her infernal
hate.

Put your anxious thoughts away, the swordsman Hagen to
him said;
I myself throughout the night watch will keep on every
bed,
And you loyally will guard till morning brings the light
of day.
Rest till then without a fear; after that escape who
may.

Then they bent before him all, and with hearty thanks to
him,
Got without delay to bed. Nor was there spent much wasted
time
Ere in sleep and comfort lay all these brave heroic
men.
The bold, intrepid Hagen then himself to arm at once
began.

Then was the hardy fiddleman, the swordsman Volker, quick
to say:
Should you, Hagen, not disdain, will I with you on duty
stay,
And guard to-night the sleepers here till the darkness all
hath sped.
Hagen then to Volker gave heartily his thanks, and
said:

God of heaven you reward, noble Volker, dearest
friend!
In all the cares that now I feel is none on whom I can
depend
So fully as on you alone, however great may be my
need.
I thoroughly will you requite if death do not prevent the
deed.

Then the two at once put on their resplendent coats of
mail.
And each of them upon his arm his trusty buckler did
impale.
Out of the house they made their way, standing now be-
fore the door,
There the visitors to guard; which office faithfully they
bore.

Volker, brave and agile knight, from his sturdy hand let
fall
His excellent and trusty shield, leaning it against the
wall;
Then went back into the house where his fiddle he might
find,
And paid his service to his friends, as seemly was in truth
and kind.

Close below their lodging's door sat he down upon a
stone.
Fiddle-player much more brave on the earth was hardly
known.
When from off the strings he drew melodies so soft and
sweet,
All those homeless wanderers Volker well with thanks did
greet.

From the strings then sent he notes that did in all the
house resound.
Both his mighty strength and skill were such as seldom
to be found.
Sweeter tones and more subdued the master then to play
began,
Bringing thus refreshing sleep to many a tired, care-
worn man.

When they were all in slumber deep and Volker was thereof
aware,
Then the minstrel warrior took in hand his shield once
more,
And again outside the house went before the door to
stand,
All his friends to watch and guard from Kriemhilda's vas-
sal band.

About the middle of the night, or earlier it might have
been,
Volker, hardy warrior, saw a distant helmet's
sheen,
As in the darkness it appeared. Those that Kriemhild
there had won
Willingly unto the guests would some injury have
done.

In presence of the warriors who from Kriemhild thus did
fare,
If, she said, you find them out, for the sake of God take
care,
That among them none you slay except the one intended
man,
Faithless Hagen, no one else; let the rest in peace
remain.

Then the fiddle-player said: You, friend Hagen, now may
see
How suitable it is for us in this affair conjoined to
be.
Armed before the house I see verily some people
stand;
And, if I not mistaken am, they us to set upon
intend.

Silence keep, Sir Hagen said, till they nearer to us
come.
Ere they us can clearly see will each protecting helmet's
dome
Be cut in pieces by the swords we in our two hands shall
wield.
Them to Kriemhild we will send in bad condition from the
field.

Then a swordsman of the Huns very quickly saw, in
truth,
Guarded well the door to be, and hastily he said: For-
sooth,
What we in our minds contrived at present cannot be at-
tained.
The fiddle-player I can see before the house as sentry
stand.

He supports upon his head a shining helmet bright and
clear,
Its metal solid and compact, in addition strong and
sheer.
Of his coat of mail the rings like a blazing fire
glow.
Hagen also near by stands; the guests are well protected
now.

On their heels they turned again. Volker this at length
well saw,
And to the comrade at his side in furious anger spake once
more:
Let me from the house at once, that to these warriors I
go,
There to ask about the news those who Kriemhild's colors
show.

Not if me you hold in love, Hagen to his friend with-
stood.
If you from the house depart, then the active swordsmen
would
You reduce with their keen blades to a state of urgent
need,
And to help should I be forced even though our friends
be dead.

Should we both together now get mixed up in any
fight,
Two or three of them could then in a moment's speedy
flight
Quickly spring into the house, and such grievous dam-
age do
Among our sleeping warriors, as we until our death might
rue.

Volker answered yet again: Let us so ourselves de-
mean,
As at least to let them know that by us they have been
seen;
Thus will be Kriemhilda's men unable ever to
deny
That to act they ready were toward the guests with per-
fidy.

Loud the fiddle-player called to Kriemhilda's fleeing
Huns:
Why about here thus, in arms, prowl ye very valiant
ones?
To murder is it ye would go, men by Kriemhild so well
paid?
Be that so, then you to help take me, too, and my com-
rade.

No answer was by him received; he came into an angry
mood;
Fie, ye coward miscreants! called in wrath the hero
good;
To us assassinate in sleep sneak ye thus about at
night?
Intrepid heroes until now in such a thing would not de-
light.

Soon the fullest news was brought, and to the queen herself conveyed,

That her design had come to nought; and gloomy she by this was made.

She then contrived it otherwise, for she was furious in her mood;

Thereby destruction soon must come to many a knight both brave and good.

THIRTY - FIRST ADVENTURE

HOW THE BURGUNDIAN PRINCES WENT TO CHURCH

VOLKER at this time now spake: Grown my harness
has so cold,
It seems to me as if the night must rapidly be getting
old.
I the air so bracing feel we must now be near the
day.
They awakened many then who softly yet in slumber
lay.

Radiant morning now appeared to cheer the guests within
the hall;
Hagen then began to ask the brave, intrepid warriors
all,
Would they to the minster go, early mass therein to
hear.
In accord with Christian rule the bell its summons uttered
clear.

Odd and uneven was the chant, at which could little wonder
be.
Christian with a heathen folk in such a thing must dis-
agree.
The men of Gunther's retinue to church had strong desire
to go,
So all together from their beds quickly they themselves did
show.

Then robed himself each warrior in such magnificent attire,
That never any heroes had, to land of any royal sire,
Better garments with them brought. Hagen thus was filled with care.
Better would ye do, he said, if other vesture ye should wear.

It surely is by every one known very well how matters stand;
Instead of taking roses, then, bear your weapons in your hand;
In place of well-bejewelled hats take your shining helmets good;
Since we well have ascertained the wickedness of Kriemhild's mood.

We to-day shall have to fight, that at least will I declare.
Then instead of silken shirts your good hauberks you should wear.
And in place of mantles rich your trusty bucklers let us see,
So that if assailed you are ready for defence you be.

Masters dear unto my heart, highly valued friends and men,
Take your places in the church with your heart and conscience clean.
There before Almighty God bemoan your cares and misery;
For without the slightest doubt know that death for all is nigh.

Take you care not to forget what each of you has ever
done ;
And in the presence of your God devoutly stand you every
one.
Most illustrious warriors, let not my warning be in
vain ;
If God in heaven help you not you never mass will hear
again.

To the vast cathedral went the noble princes and their
men.
When within the close they came, motionless to there re-
main
Hagen sternly ordered them, that they parted might not
be.
Never is one sure, he said, what he next from Huns may
see.

Noble friends, your shields put down, let them at your feet
repose ;
And if to-day should any one unfriendliness to you
disclose,
Pay him with a mortal wound ; that doth Hagen you
advise.
Thus alone can you be found worthy of esteem and
praise.

Volker and Hagen, as arranged, both together went
ahead,
And before the minster stood. Deliberately this they
did,
For they wished thereby to cause the noble queen to be
compelled,
As she passed, to crowd on them. Anger them to this im-
pelled.

Then the monarch of the land came with his illustrious
wife;
In garments was she habited rich indeed past all be-
lief,
And many active warriors who in attendance on her
were.
Up went the dust in clouds on high from the queen's brave
hosts astir.

When the great and mighty king in armor saw before his
eyes
The princes and their retinue, he then said in great sur-
prise:
How is it that my friends I see standing here with helm on
head?
Greatly should I grieve, indeed, if evil they had cause to
dread.

To them I would for it atone in any way considered
good;
If any one hath troubled them or annoyed in heart or
mood,
I will let it soon be seen how I thereat with grief am
spent.
Whatever they of me demand I readily to them will
grant.

To him in answer Hagen said: No one yet hath worked us
woe;
With these lords it is the way completely armed like this to
go,
At all such court festivities, at least for three entire
days.
Should any one now injure us complaint to Etzel we should
raise.

Very clearly heard the queen what by Hagen had been said.

How she at the swordsman looked and hateful glances on him shed!

Yet she would not then disclose the customs of her native land;

Though long with the Burgundians she well as he did understand.

However much the angry queen toward them might disaffected be,

Had any one to Etzel told the truth in all sincerity,

He could have obviated well what, however, came to pass.

But in their great and haughty pride they nothing brought before his face.

Then with many people went Kriemhild to the minster door.

Yet the two who there had gone would not from her path withdraw

As much as by a single inch, which for the Huns much sorrow brewed.

By this means was she compelled with the ready knights to crowd.

Etzel's mighty chamberlains by the matter were displeased.

They would have the warriors gladly into combat roused,

If they such a thing had dared in the presence of the king.

They jostled one another much, and nothing further from it sprang.

When the service over was, and people thought of going
home,
Many a Hun full well was seen quickly to his horse to
come.

Also at Kriemhilda's side was many a fair and lovely
maid;

Nearly seven thousand men waiting on the queen did
ride.

With her women Kriemhild now in the open casement
sat,

At the mighty Etzel's side; right glad indeed was he
thereat.

Places there they took to see the noble heroes tilting
show;

Many a foreign warrior found they in the court
below.

The marshal now himself arrived; with him came the
horses out.

The bold, intrepid Dankwart had with him to the conflict
brought

His noble masters' retinue from the far Burgundian
ground.

The saddles of the Niblung steeds magnificent and good
were found.

Soon as they had taken horse, the princes and the fight-
ing men,

Volker, the undaunted knight, to counsel and advise
began,

That in tourney they engage, following their country's
rule.

Up the heroes gave themselves to knightly riding now in
full.

What the hero had advised did no one there at all dispute.

The tournament and weapon's clang soon became exceeding great.

Within the wide courtyard was seen assembled many a hardy man;

Etzel with Kriemhilda now to look upon the sport began.

To the tournament there came six hundred swordsmen of the best,

Warriors of Dieterich, against the guests with spear in rest.

With these Burgundians they wished to come in frolic face to face.

Had their master this allowed soon would it have taken place.

Ah, what noble warriors, and what riding there was shown!

To the hero Dieterich soon the news was all made known.

With Gunther's hardy followers tourney strictly he forbade;

He was sparing of his men, and truly dire need he had.

When had Dietrich's followers drawn from off the field of strife,

Forward from Bechlaren came those of whom was Rudger chief,

Five hundred of them, bearing shields, their horses rode before the hall.

Sad the margrave was at this; most gladly would he end it all.

Came he quickly now to them, pressing through the surging crowd,
And said to his intrepid men: You see as well as any could,
That mighty Gunther's followers are all of them quite ill at ease.
If you the tournament will quit me thereby you much will please.

When from them, as he had bid, the ready heroes had retired,
The men of old Thuringia came, as full often we have heard,
And from Denmark, furthermore, quite a thousand hardy men.
From the blows was seen to fly in air many a splinter then.

Irnfried, and Sir Hawart, too, gallant in the lists did ride;
Those who from the Rhine had come bravely met them on their side,
And well encountered with the lance those from out Thuringian land.
With heavy blows was stricken through many a shield in valiant hand.

Bloedel next, the hardy knight, with three thousand men appeared.
Etzel and Kriemhilda, then, clearly them both saw and heard,
For plainly there before the two all the games below were played.
Hate to these Burgundians made the queen to see them glad.

In her faithless heart she thought, as truly happened later
on :

Surely I may well expect if to any they do
harm,

That earnest fighting will begin. Upon my enemies at
last

Entirely shall I be avenged; then will all my woes be
past.

Schrutan and Gibeka, too, into the tourney then did
run;

Hornbog and the bold Ramung, after the manner of the
Hun,

Against the knights of Burgundy themselves now pitted
in the brawl.

The hurling lances whirling flew high above the palace
wall.

However fiercely they might ride all was but an empty
sound.

With clash and blow upon the shields, in the house and
o'er the ground,

Echoing was heard the noise from Gunther's many hardy
men.

All his followers did praise as well as lofty honor
win.

Then became the royal sport so fierce and such exertion
showed,

That over all the saddle-cloths frothy foam abundant
flowed

From the fine and gallant steeds, so the valiant heroes
rode.

With the Huns they proved their skill in knightly deed
and princely mode.

The gallant Volker then spake out, proud and noble fiddle-
man:

Too cowardly these warriors are to cope with us upon the
plain.

Often have I heard it said that they us cordially do
hate;

Never was a better time to put the matter to its
fate.

Each to his own stall again, now the noble monarch
said,

Have the horses led away; we perchance shall further
ride

In the later evening hours, if time sufficient then
arise.

Maybe to these Burgundians the queen may choose to give
the prize.

Riding at this moment came one who did so well him
bear,

That among the sturdy Huns could none other so
appear.

At the window there, perhaps, he a loved one viewed with
pride.

As splendidly attired he rode as a noble swordsman's
bride.

Volker said yet once again: This how can I help
achieve?

Yonder pet of womankind from me a thrust must now
receive.

From this can no one make me turn, he well must look out
for his life.

Not the smallest care have I how it may anger Etzel's
wife.

Nay, do it not, replied the king, if me at all you reverence.

The people will us greatly blame if the battle we commence.

Allow the Huns the fray to start; better thus shall we be seen.

Still King Etzel kept his seat within the window by the queen.

I will join you in the tilt, Hagen said with temper fell.

Let us now these women give, and the warriors as well,

A chance to see how we can ride; it will be well as I believe.

Scanty is the praise indeed Gunther's warriors receive.

Volker, the intrepid knight, rode again into the strife.

Alas, the women had, from that, filled their very hearts with grief.

Through the body of the Hun went his strong, unyielding spear.

Hence did many a dame and maid shed thereafter many a tear.

Hagen all at once advanced with his heroes to the din.

With sixty of his swordsmen he began to follow on therein

Where, by that bold fiddleman, carried on had been the play.

Etzel and the fair Kriemhild all could very plainly see.

Also would not the noble kings the brave and hardy fiddler
leave
In among his enemies, without such help as they could
give.
A thousand heroes of their troop riding came in height of
skill;
What they listed that they did with an overbearing
will.

When the rich and haughty Hun thus was smitten down in
death,
Soon was heard among his friends woful sound and moan-
ing breath.
Demanded then his followers: Who hath this so foully
done?
It the hardy fiddler was, Volker, that audacious
one!

Then called for all their swords and shields quickly to be
placed at hand,
The noble margrave's sturdy friends, coming from the
Hunnen land.
They were minded well to slay that intrepid fiddle-
man.
From his window now the host at once to hasten thence
began.

There arose among the Huns on every side a mighty
brawl.
With the troops dismounted there the noble kings before
the hall;
Back the horses quickly drove Gunther's men the stalls
within.
Then forthwith King Etzel came to end the awful strife
and din.

From a kinsman of the Hun, whom he by the body
found,
He snatched away a sharpened sword that he held within
his hand;
And every one he thrust aside. With fury was his heart
assailed.
How in services have I to these noble heroes
failed!

If this gallant minstrel now you for this affair had
slain,
All of you would I let hang. That to tell you I am
fain.
When he struck and killed the Hun I his riding noticed
well,
And saw that no intent was there; his horse beneath him
well-nigh fell.

Now I bid you let my guests hence depart in perfect
peace.
Thus their escort he became. The steeds were taken from
the place,
And toward the stables led. Grooms in numbers there were
seen
Whose duty to attend them was, which they did with ardor
keen.

Then the host and all his friends to the hall did now
advance.
Angry passions were restrained under his afflicted
glance.
Tables swiftly were prepared; water for their use was
brought.
There the men from up the Rhine found bitter
enemies about.

Though King Etzel liked it not, on the princes closely
pressed
A goodly host of angry Huns, who held weapons of the
best,
In high ill-humor at the guests, as now to table they all
went.
Their kinsman's slaughter to avenge they at fitting time
were bent.

That you would rather with your arms to table come than
weaponless,
The monarch of the land then said, shows far too great
a surliness.
Still, whoever on the guests the smallest injury shall
dare,
Shall requite it with his head; you Huns, I say, had best
beware.

Ere the lords had taken seat long did weary time ex-
tend,
Because too heavily with care did Kriemhilda now con-
tend.
Prince of Berne, to-day, she said, I am forced of thee
to crave
Thy wise counsel and support; affairs with me are very
grave.

In reply said Hildebrand, a virtuous and worthy
knight,
Who shall strike the Nibelungs from me will no assistance
get,
Whatever be the recompense; and he the consequence
might rue,
For remain unconquered yet those intrepid warriors
do.

Hagen only me concerns, who hath to me such sorrow
brought;
Who so treacherously slew Siegfried, my beloved
knight.
If apart one him should place, to that one would I give my
gold;
If any other injured be I shall suffer grief un-
told.

Then again said Hildebrand: How brought to pass could
that well be,
That only one of them be slain? You yourself ought well
to see
If overcome one swordsman was, such disturbance would
ensue,
That all together, rich and poor, must to life then bid
adieu.

In addition Dietrich said, with faithful heart as ever
seen:
Bring such discourse now to end, noble and illustrious
queen.
None of your good friends to me have such grievous mis-
chief done,
That in angry strife I now shall against the warriors
run.

No honor brings you this request, noble consort of the
king,
That with us you now consult how to kinsmen death to
bring.
In good faith came they to you, and arrived within this
land;
Siegfried will at present stay unavenged by Dietrich's
hand.

When she could no disloyalty discover in the lord of
Berne,
At once with gracious promises to Bloedel she began to
turn.
An estate would she him give that formerly had Nudung's
been.
Later he the gift forgot, for by Dankwart was he
slain.

You should help me now, she said, my worthy brother
Bloedelein;
Within this very palace here are many enemies of
mine,
Who Siegfried traitorously slew, the husband of my earlier
days;
Who will help me this avenge shall receive reward and
praise.

To her in answer Bloedel said, as beside her he now
sat:
I dare not against your friends manifest such signal
hate,
For to them is much attached my brother Etzel, as
you know;
If I harm on them inflict, pardon would the king not
show.

Bloedel, that is not the case; by thee I stand while I shall
live;
And unto thee as thy reward my gold and silver I will
give;
And a fair and lovely dame, the widow of the great
Nudung,
To whom canst thou in future days ever with caresses
cling.

Castles and surrounding lands, everything to thee I
give,
And in peace, beloved knight, thou with her shalt ever
live,
When the vast estates thou win that Nudung once did
occupy.
With the promises I make in best of faith will I com-
ply.

When this proposal Bloedel heard, and the greatness of his
pay,
Also for her beauty's sake the woman did him
satisfy,
Wished he now that in the fight he might perchance this
fair wife gain.
For this the bold, intrepid knight forfeited his life in
vain.

Then to the queen, Kriemhild, he said: Go back again into
the hall.
Ere suspicion is aroused I engage to raise a
brawl.
The evil he to you hath done Hagen now must
expiate.
Bound I soon to you will bring noble Gunther's hardy
knight.

Now, said Bloedel, arm yourself, every single man of
mine!
We our foes will try to find and in their lodgings fall
upon.
From this trial no release will ever grant me Etsel's
wife;
Therefore, heroes, we must go, and for her risk limb and
life.

When the fair and lovely queen had the swordsman Bloedel
left
The encounter to begin, to the table then she
went,
With King Etzel by her side, and many men who with them
lived.
An atrocious plot had she against their honored guests
contrived.

How she to the table went I to you will now make
known.
Mighty monarchs could be seen before her then to bear
the crown;
Many high-born princes there and worthy swordsmen not
a few,
In humility were seen before the lovely queen to
go.

The king unto his visitors seats assigned for one and
all;
Those possessing highest rank next him sat within the
hall.
For pagan and for Christian provided was a different
fare;
Plenty was to both supplied according to the monarch's
care.

In their lodgings by themselves feasted was the ret-
inue.
By servants for their special use were their wants attended
to;
Entertained were they by those who with zeal toward them
burned.
This hospitality and joy was soon to lamentation
turned.

Deeply buried in her heart lay Kriemhilda's ancient
grief ;
And knowing of no other way whereby she could arouse
the strife,
Bade she to the table bring noble Etzel's infant
son.
How could a woman for revenge such an awful thing have
done?

Out went four of Etzel's men, underlings in his em-
ploy ;
Ortlieb in their arms they brought, unoffending princeling
boy,
To table where the princes were, at which Sir Hagen also
sat.
There the fair child had to die, because of his most deadly
hate.

Then when Etzel, royal king, on his son had bent his
eyes,
To the brothers of his wife he spake thus in courtly
wise :
See ye now, my worthy friends, this infant is my only
child,
And that of your fair sister here, who to you will service
yield.

If he like his sires become he will grow an honored
man,
Powerful, and noble too, brave, and of a goodly
mien.
Live I but to see all this him I shall give twelve monarchs'
land.
Ye good service may receive from young Ortlieb's willing
hand.

Gladly then I ye entreat, well-beloved friends of
mine,
When your homeward trip ye make back again toward the
Rhine,
That with you ye then convey your dear sister's only
child;
And ever be toward the boy with compassion kindly
filled.

Bring him up in honor's rules till he becomes a full-
grown man.
Should within your whole domain any harm to you be
done,
He will help you it avenge when he reaches manhood's
pride.
Full well this talk Kriemhilda heard as she sat by Etzel's
side.

All these swordsmen will on him most implicitly
rely
When he grows to man's estate, uttered Hagen in
reply.
The youthful king, however, is in appearance somewhat
weak;
I but seldom shall be seen to Ortlieb's court my way to
make.

The king at Hagen gave a glance; his language greatly
him annoyed.
Though nothing in response he said, this king of artifice
devoid,
It yet disturbed him in his soul, and his spirit made to
bleed.
Sir Hagen had but little mind for merry jest in word and
deed.

What at this time Hagen said of the monarch's infant
son,

Affected not alone the king; it grieved the chieftains every
one.

Thus to have it to endure all of them it greatly
vexed.

They could not, alas, foresee what from him would happen
next.

Many who the words had heard, and ill-will toward
him bore,

Gladly would him have attacked. The king himself, in-
deed, forebore

Because his honor so compelled. Harm to Hagen might
arise.

Soon that knight did him greater wrong; he slew his child
before his eyes.

THIRTY - SECOND ADVENTURE

HOW BLOEDEL FOUGHT WITH DANKWART IN THE HALL

THE warriors of Bloedel stood ready for the dismal work;
In a thousand habergeons they into the hall did stalk,
Where the mettlesome Dankwart with his men at table sat.
Between the sturdy warriors soon arose the fiercest hate.

When toward the tables marched Bloedel, the undaunted knight,
Gave him Dankwart, marshal there, a reception friendly quite.
Welcome here within this house, worthy master, Bloedelein;
I wonder why you hither come; what news to me would you consign?

Bloedel said: You need not me in a friendly fashion greet,
For my coming to this place means that you your end must meet,
For your brother Hagen's sake, who the noted Siegfried slew.
The Huns will now the penalty from these heroes all, and you.

Nay now, Bloedel, Dankwart said, you these words can never mean;
Sorely then might we repent our journey to your court and queen.
I nothing but an infant was when your Siegfried lost his life,
And I know not, verily, why would harm me Etzel's wife.

Respecting why I came to you nothing more have I to say.
Gunther and Hagen, kin of yours, undoubtedly did Siegfried slay.
Wanderers, defend yourselves, longer can you not here live.
You with death are now compelled to Kriemhild a pledge to give.

If you from this will not desist, Dankwart said between his teeth,
I repent of my request; would that I had spared my breath.
The brave and agile warrior from the table quickly sprang,
Drawing forth at once a sword, powerful and sharp and long.

Bloedel with it then he struck a blow with such dexterity,
That in its helmet instantly at their feet his head did lie.
Let that your nuptial present be, the nimble warrior further said;
That to Nudung's widow take, whom you gladly would have wed.

She easily may be betrothed to-morrow to some other
man;
If a bridal gift he wish the same may well to him be
done.
A loyal and devoted Hun to him had information
brought,
Of how that daughter of a king on their full destruction
thought.

When Sir Bloedel's angry men their master saw before
them slain,
Longer would they not the guests in their presence let
remain.
Swinging swords above their heads on the noble knights
they flew,
In wild and unrestricted rage; the which did later many
rue.

Then the marshal Dankwart called to the yeomen of his
band:
Well ye see, my noble squires, what ye now may have on
hand.
Guard yourselves, ye homeless ones, according to neces-
sity,
That without a trace of shame ye in defensive death may
lie.

Those who came without their swords seized the benches
in their hate;
And aloft from off the floor hurled the stools on which they
sat.
These Burgundian esquires would not in anything give
way.
With the benches they were seen bumps to raise and spread
dismay.

Sturdily the poor esquires themselves defended in the
strife.

Their assailants armed they drove from the house in fear
of life.

Half a thousand there or more lay about the tables
dead.

All the gallant retinue with blood was wet and also
red.

The awful and bewildering news was very speedily
conveyed

To mighty Etzel's warriors. They instantly were furious
made,

In that Bloedel and his men death in such a manner
won.

Hagen's brother had the deed with his hardy warriors
done.

Ere the king had it well seen a band of Huns did there
appear,

Armed and in an angry mood, two thousand or more
strong, we hear.

They rushed upon the Rhenish men, as indeed it had to
be,

And let from there escape alive not one of that whole com-
pany.

Before the house the faithless ones a mighty host of sol-
diers brought.

The homeless and forlorn esquires in defence with courage
fought.

But how could bravery avail? All were fated there to
die.

Thereafter, in a little while, began a grimmer
destiny.

Of wonderful and monstrous deeds you now may hear what
I can say.
Of the squires nine thousand fell, and dead within the
building lay,
Besides a dozen warriors in the bold Dankwart's com-
mand.
He utterly alone was seen among his enemies to
stand.

Somewhat hushed the tumult was, the rumble of the con-
flict ceased.
Then as about him Dankwart looked, that hero brave, his
grief increased.
Woe, he said, for all the friends that lying dead about I
see!
Now, alas, alone must I among my foes hereafter
be.

With heavy blows the weapons fell over him from foot to
head,
For which would many a hero's wife tears in bitter sorrow
shed.
Higher than his shield he raised, also let descend its
thong;
Many a harness then was seen steeped in blood ere very
long.

A curse upon this hideous wrong! the noble son of Aldrian
said.
Away, ye Hunnish warriors, and let me to the air pro-
ceed,
That its breezes may me cool, tired and battle-weary
man.
Then toward the door to press he amid the blows be-
gan.

There, as the contest-jaded man out of the house now
quickly sprang,
From many a freshly-wielded sword the sound upon his
helmet rang.
They who had not yet observed the wonders of his stalwart
hand,
Forward bounded to oppose him from the Burgundian
land.

Would to God, Sir Dankwart said, that I a messenger
might have,
By whom my brother Hagen might the grave intelligence
receive,
That I, before these warriors, am in such dire ex-
tremity.
He would me assist from here or himself beside me
die.

Then the Hunnish warriors said: Thou the messenger shalt
be,
When from here thy lifeless form to thy brother we con-
vey ;
Not till then will Gunther's man know how he has been
bereaved.
Unto Etzel thou hast done greater harm than is be-
lieved.

Stop your menaces, he said, and get yourselves away from
me,
Or completely soaked with blood will many suits of armor
be.
My information to the court by myself shall access
gain ;
I in person of my wrongs to their lordships will com-
plain.

Himself so undesirable to Etzel's warriors he
made,
That to make attacks on him they with swords were all
afraid.
Into the buckler that he bore so many lances they pro-
pelled,
That from weight to let it fall from his hand was he com-
pelled.

Now they thought him to subdue, as he his shield no longer
bore;
Ah, how many serious wounds through the helmets then he
tore!
There before him quickly fell many a bold and hardy
man;
Thus honor great and high esteem the sturdy Dankwart
thereby won.

Right and left as he advanced his adversaries on him
sprang;
Many of them, verily, joined too early in the
fight.
Through his foes he fought his way as a wild and harried
boar
In forest flies before the dogs. Of boldness how could he
show more?

Evermore anew his way was marked with freshly flowing
blood.
How could any warrior ever have alone with-
stood
Such a multitude of foes as he was bravely doing
now?
Hagen's brother could be seen grandly to the court to
go.

By them all attending there could the clash of arms be
heard ;
Goblets many full of wine from their hands were thereby
jarred,
As also dishes holding meat, which were carried to the
court.
Then he found before the stairs enemies of starker
sort.

How now, ye villain servitors? then the jaded swordsman
said ;
You should think about the guests, and with plenty have
them fed.
To your lords and masters go, noble meats to them to
bear,
And me let all my dire news with my devoted masters
share.

Those who there had courage won before the stairs him
sprang toward ;
Such overwhelming blows to some he freely furnished with
his sword,
That the others, out of fear, left for him a passage
free.
His bravery and mighty strength wrought wondrous deeds
for men to see.

THIRTY - THIRD ADVENTURE

HOW THE BURGUNDIANS FOUGHT AGAINST THE HUNS

WHEN the mighty Dankwart came and set his feet
within the door,
And Etzel's followers he bade his way to clear across the
floor,
All his attire from head to foot entirely was with blood
bestained.
An ugly weapon, very sharp, he carried naked in his
hand.

At the very selfsame time that he thus came within the
door,
Little Ortlieb here and there in the hall the servants
bore,
And to the lofty princes there at table after table
showed.
To Dankwart's agonizing news the boy his death soon after
owed.

Clearly Dankwart shouted out to one good swordsman in
the place:
Brother Hagen, here you sit peaceably too long a
space.
To God in heaven and to you I complain of our great
need;
Knights and squires in numbers lie yonder in their lodg-
ings dead.

In return the other called: By whom hath such a deed
been done?

By the swordsman Bloedel there, and his host of vassal
men.

Dearly for it they have paid, I can you assure of
that.

With this sturdy hand of mine off his head was quickly
cut.

That no great misfortune is, Hagen answered undis-
mayed,

Whenever of a warrior honestly can it be
said,

That by a gallant hero's hand he hath thus been over-
thrown.

So much the less will women have reason for him to be-
moan.

Brother Dankwart, tell me now, why do you come here so
red?

You, I think, are in distress from injuries that freely
bled.

If he be within this land by whom all this has come
about,

May the devil help him then, or for him will life be
nought.

Me without a scratch you see, albeit I am wet with
blood.

All has issued from the wounds of other swordsmen brave
and good,

Of whom so many I to-day have been forced to cut
and kill,

That were I even under oath the number you I could not
tell.

Brother Dankwart, then he said, stand you guard upon
the door,
And of all the Huns you see let not one desert this
floor.
I with the warriors will have speech, as I by urgent need
am led.
Lie through them our followers guiltless in their quarters
dead.

Chamberlain shall I become? queried then the hardy
knight.
With such mighty monarchs here well the office would me
suit.
At the stairs I guard will stand on my honor faith-
fully.
To Kriemhilda's warriors could nothing now more grievous
be.

I wonder what it is about, the dauntless Hagen said
also,
That the Huns around us here to one another whisper
so.
They, I think, could well dispense with him who watches at
the door,
Who to us Burgundians the ghastly news but lately
bore.

For longer time than I could name about Kriemhilda I
have heard,
That unavenged she would not let rest the murder of her
lord.
Drink we to his memory, and thereby test King Etzel's
wine.
This young Hunnish lord shall be included first in that
design.

On the fair child, Ortlieb, then Hagen dealt so fierce a
blow,
That down his sword upon his hand the ruddy blood began
to flow,
And within his mother's lap the severed head directly
fell.
Thereon among these warriors began a slaughter
terrible.

Then the tutor at the court, who had the young child in
his care,
With both his mighty hands he struck ere he of it was
aware,
So that to the table's feet off his shoulders flew his
head.
A sorry recompense it was he to this good warden
paid.

At Etzel's table then he spied a minstrel sitting
quietly;
Hagen, in his furious wrath, at the bard did quickly
fly,
And upon his violin cut off the poor man's good right
hand.
That, he said, hath fully earned thy messages to Gunther's
land.

Alas, my hand! did Werbel cry, fiddleman at Etzel's
court;
Tell me, Hagen, have I done you ever harm of any
sort?
I in all fidelity came into your master's
land.
How melody can I produce, now that I have lost my
hand?

Little did Sir Hagen care if he never fiddled
more.
In the palace now he wreaked all his savage lust for
gore
On King Etzel's warriors, killing of them not a
few.
Under cover of that hall he in fury numbers
slew.

Volker, his companion, then rose from table with a
bound ;
Loud his massive fiddlebow as he it wielded did re-
sound.
Airs uncouth were then produced by Gunther's sturdy
fiddleman ;
And what vindictive enemies among the Huns he thereby
won !

From the table also sprang all three monarchs of the
Rhine,
The enemies to separate, and in bounds the harm con-
fine.
But, endeavor as they might, could the conflict not be
stilled ;
Volker and Sir Hagen, both, with such fury then were
filled.

The lord of Burgundy now saw that he the strife could not
compose ;
Therefore did the king himself many wounds upon his
foes.
Many a shining coat of mail through his sword a passage
cut.
That he brave and skilful was soon was shown beyond
dispute.

The bold and mighty Prince Gernot also came into the
strife,
And among the Huns deprived many a hero of his
life,
With the keenly cutting sword that Rudiger unto him
gave ;
And wherewith he many brought of Etzel's warriors to
the grave.

The youngest of Queen Uta's sons bounded also to the
fray ;
Grandly did his trusty sword through the helmets make its
way,
Among the bravest warriors of Etzel of the Hunnen
land.
Wonders great that day performed Geiselher's resistless
hand.

Howsoever brave might be the noble monarchs and their
men,
Yet was Volker, by his deeds, to overtop all others
seen,
Among his mighty enemies. He was indeed a swordsman
good ;
With unsightly wounds he laid many down below in
blood.

Themselves defended also well who were there of Etzel's
men.
Hewing up and down their way were the visitors yet
seen,
Gleaming weapons in their hands, in the whole of that
vast hall.
Heard from every quarter were cries of pain amid the
brawl.

Those upon the outside now desired to get to friends
within,
But soon they saw that by the door little passage could
they win.
Also they who were within outward willingly would
speed.
Neither up nor down the stairs Dankwart let a soul pro-
ceed.

So great a crowd of angry men gathered now before the
door,
And such a din of swords arose as they upon the helmets
bore,
That in thus maintaining guard Dankwart was in danger
found.
Him his brother wished to help, as in honor he was
bound.

Then to Volker Hagen cried in his clear, far-reaching
tones:
Comrade, do you down there see before a crowd of angry
Huns
Stand my brother, all alone, sore beset by their hard
blows?
Guard my brother, friend, for me, ere the swordsman we
shall lose.

That directly will I do, answered back the fiddle-
man.
Then with music through the hall he to make his way
began.
Soon a sharp and agile sword in his hand did oft re-
sound.
Then the Rhenish warriors did with thanks to him
abound.

Volker then, the gallant man, to the hardy Dankwart
said:

You have suffered here to-day blows and toil un-
limited.

Me your brother hath desired to bring to you a helping
hand.

If you outside will therefore stay I within will take my
stand.

At once brave Dankwart swiftly went his place without the
door to take;

There defended he the stairs from all who wished to en-
trance make.

Heard the weapons were to sound, held by heroes well in
hand.

Also did the same within Volker of Burgundian
land.

Loud the hardy fiddleman shouted out above the
crowd:

Hagen, fast the house is closed; rest to you is now
allowed.

Well and firmly fastened up is the mighty Etzel's
door,

By two heroes' fearless hands; a thousand bolts they go
before.

When Von Tronya Hagen saw fast indeed the door se-
cured,

On his shoulder threw his shield that warrior so well as-
sured.

Now earnestly he first began to avenge his comrades'
grief;

And for his anger must atone many a warrior brave in
strife.

When the governor of Berne all the wonder truly
saw,
How the sturdy Hagen broke the helmets that his foemen
wore,
Sprang the Amelungen prince from the floor upon a
bench.
Hagen, said he, poureth out bitter wine our thirst to
quench.

In Etzel's and Kriemhilda's hearts did the greatest grief
arise.
Of their loved friends many were killed, alas, before their
eyes.
Scarcely did the king himself escape his foeman's
enmity.
In the greatest fear he sat. What use to him a king to
be?

Kriemhild then, the mighty queen, Dietrich called amid
the strife:
Noble hero, help me now hence to hasten with my
life,
By the virtue of a prince from the Amelungen
land;
Should me Hagen ever reach would my death be near at
hand.

How possibly can I you help, Dietrich shouted in re-
ply,
Noble and illustrious queen? I am myself in
agony.
They of Gunther's retinue are so full of rage and
pride,
That at this hour cannot I for anybody's peace pro-
vide.

Nay, Sir Dietrich, verily, noble and most valiant knight,
Let to us to-day appear thy courage and thy princely might;
Help me to escape from here, or I dead behind remain.
Deliver me and our good king from this misery and pain.

Surely I will you attempt in this your dire need to aid;
Yet for long have I not seen, can it well with truth be said,
In so furious a rage many knights with courage good.
Through the helmets still I see from the wounds spout forth the blood.

Then with force began to call the warrior brave, fair Kriemhild's choice,
So loud that like a bison's horn sounded in the house his voice,
And echoed through the citadel every word distinct and strong.
A power such as few possessed did to Dieterich belong.

Finally King Gunther heard the call of this loud-voiced man,
Amid the fearful din and brawl. To listen he at once began.
Dietrich's shout amid the strife even now hath reached my ear.
Our swordsmen have in this affair some of his laid low, I fear.

On the table I him see making signals with his
hand.
Kinsmen and devoted friends from our good Burgundian
land,
For awhile this fighting stop, till to us hath been ex-
plained
What injury Sir Dietrich hath from my warriors sus-
tained.

When King Gunther thus did them earnestly entreat and
pray,
Lowered every one his sword at the hottest of the
fray.
He manifested so his might that no one struck a further
blow.
Then desired he him of Berne his news to quickly let him
know.

Noble Dieterich, he said, what has happened now to
you
From any of my allies here? What is proper I
will do.
To recompense and make it good ready shall I ever
be.
Whatever has been done to you to me will truly grievous
be.

Then the noble Dietrich said: To me and mine has hap-
pened nought.
Allow me from the house at once, with your safe conduct, to
depart
From this melancholy strife, with the men of my com-
mand.
Thus, O king, shall I to you ever in true service
stand.

Why in this way supplicate? queried then the bold Wolf-
hart;
The fiddle-player doth not hold the entrance so securely
barred
That we it cannot open wide and to the outer air pro-
ceed.
Hold thy peace, Sir Dietrich said, thou hast done the
devil's deed.

Gunther then to him replied: I grant you freely your
appeal.
From the house depart you now, just as many as you
will,
Leaving but my enemies; they shall in the place re-
main.
From the Huns have I endured far too much of bitter
pain.

When the Bernese prince heard this, he put his arm at
once around
The beautiful and noble queen, who was racked with fear
profound;
And then by the other hand he Etzel from the palace
led;
And in the wake of Dieterich six hundred swordsmen also
sped.

The noble margrave Rudiger then to him a word did
throw:
If, moreover, from the house comes any one to further
go,
Who you willingly would serve, let the fact to us be
known;
Thus should an enduring peace with true friends be ever
shown.

Geiselher an answer then to his bride's father gave off-hand:
May full harmony and peace us between forever stand,
Ever faithful you do hold, you and all your trusty men.
You with every friend you have, without fear, may hence go, then.

When the margrave Rudiger out from Etzel's hall did stride,
Five hundred of his men or more together with him went outside.
This upon the heroes' part in all fidelity was done;
Therefrom, however, was received great injury by Gunther soon.

One of the Hunnish warriors, who saw King Etzel leave the hall
In noble Dietrich's company, thought his advantage thence to gain.
Him the fiddle-player gave a blow with such determined might,
That suddenly his head lay there on the ground at Etzel's feet.

When the monarch of the land without the palace door had sped,
There he turned with heavy heart, and looking up at Volker said:
Misery for guests like these! Terrible is my distress,
That all my gallant warriors by them in death away should pass.

Woe to this court festival! then the king did inter-
pose.

In the hall can one be seen who by name of Volker
goes,

Fighting like a savage boar, and is a noted fiddle-
man.

Life, indeed, to this I owe, that I from that devil
ran.

His melodies are harsh in sound, the stroke of his great
bow is red,

At the strains by him produced fall my heroes many
dead.

I know not what the fiddleman bears against us in his
mind;

But I never in my life so terrible a guest have
gained.

To their lodgings now went forth these two sturdy war-
riors.

Sir Dieterich, the knight of Berne, also Margrave Rudi-
ger.

Right gladly then would both of them from the strife set
free have been,

And orders to their swordsmen gave not in the conflict to be
seen.

Could the visitors have had the power to foresee the
pain

That by them would be received, by the means of these two
men,

Would they not so easily from the house their way have
gone,

Ere they had a single stroke from those warriors have
won.

Every one whom they had willed had they let go from out
the hall ;

In the place, when this was done, soon arose a fearful
brawl.

Awful vengeance took the guests for their bitter pain and
care.

How many shining helmets, then, by Volker crushed and
broken were !

Gunther, the illustrious king, turned himself toward the
noise.

Listen, Hagen, do you hear the tunes that Volker yonder
plays

With his fiddle on the Huns, when at the door themselves
they show ?

The coating is indeed quite red that he hath on his fiddle-
bow.

Said Hagen in reply to this: Beyond all measure I
regret

That ever I have been compelled myself from him to sep-
arate.

I his companion always was, and he a trusted one of
mine.

If we ever home return we in truth will so re-
main.

Look around, most noble king, and see how Volker doth
thee serve ;

How thy gold and silver he for his deeds will well de-
serve !

His fiddlebow doth well cut through steel the hardest to be
found.

From the helmets casts he down their adornments to the
ground.

Never I a minstrel saw so grandly stand amid the
fray,
As by Volker, thy good knight, hath manifested been to-
day.
The accents of his melodies sound upon the helmets
fair.
He good horses ought to ride and the richest garments
wear.

Of all the swordsmen of the Huns that within the hall had
been,
After this not one alive remained of all who had been
seen.
All the uproar then was hushed, for there none was left to
fight.
The bold intrepid warriors their weapons therefore laid
aside.

THIRTY - FOURTH ADVENTURE

HOW THEY THREW THE DEAD OUT OF THE HALL

DOWN the chieftains sat to rest, for with labor they were spent.
Volker and Sir Hagen both without the house together went.
In their haughty insolence they upon their shields did lean;
With each other they enjoyed talking in right merry vein.

Then he of Burgundy did speak, the hardy swordsman,
Geiselher:
To give yourselves quite up to rest, you, dear friends, do not yet dare;
First the bodies of the dead from the house must be conveyed.
We again shall have to fight, that in truth to you is said.

They beneath our feet ought not a moment longer to remain.
Ere the Huns in tumult here conquest over us shall gain,
Will we give them many wounds; therein I great comfort find.
I for that, said Geiselher, have a temper well inclined.

Well for me, Sir Hagen said, that such a master I possess.

No one would this counsel suit but a sword of skilfulness,

As in our young master we have this day before us seen;

Whence all ye Burgundians joy exceeding well may glean.

Then they followed this advice, and quickly by the door withdrew

Seven thousand bodies dead, which outward speedily they threw.

Before the staircase of the hall they fell together all below.

Then arose among their friends a mighty sound of grief and woe.

Many were among them seen with so trivial a wound,

That if fitting care they had health again they might have found;

Yet from this so great a fall now were numbered with the dead.

This bewailed their many friends, driven by exceeding need.

Then the fiddle-player spake, that bold swordsman undismayed:

Very well I now can see the truth of what was to me said,

That the Huns all cowards are; they like women here complain,

When attention they should give to bodies wounded and in pain.

Standing by a margrave was who this in earnest understood.
A relative of his he saw lying there amid the blood,
Whom he thought to bear away, and would embrace him then to lift;
Him the hardy minstrel struck down to death with meagre shrift.

When the others all this saw promptly fled they from the hall.
The minstrel then to execrate at once began they one and all.
Volker lifted from the earth a sharp and finely-tempered spear,
That had one among the Huns thrown at him upon the stair.

This across the castle yard he with mighty power threw
High above their every head. Etzel's people then withdrew,
Frightened at the awful throw, somewhat farther from the house.
His wondrous strength alarm and dread in all the people did produce.

Now before the palace stood Etzel with a host of men.
Volker and Hagen, seeing this, haughty words to speak began
To the great Hungarian king, according to their arrogance.
These brave heroes afterward suffered for their utterance.

A consolation, Hagen said, to people in distress, indeed,
It is when they their masters see ever fighting at the head,
As with my most noble lords every one in earnest does,
Through the helmets cutting so that blood from off their weapons flows.

Such was Etzel's bravery that at once he raised his shield.
Now be careful of thy life, said to him the Queen Kriemhild.
Offer to thy warriors gold on a shield to find its place;
If at thee shall Hagen come death will stare thee in the face.

So intrepid was the king he would not the strife forego,
For which the princes now, indeed, themselves but seldom ready show.
Aided by his buckler's thong back they dragged this noble man.
The surly-tempered Hagen then to scoff at him anew began.

The relationship is close, said Hagen, as he looked around,
That Siegfried and Etzel now hath together so well bound;
Kriemhild had he for his wife or ever she put eyes on thee.
Coward Etzel, craven king, why plottest thou to injure me?

Of what then had Hagen said heard the noble queen the
whole ;
And thereat much troubled was Kriemhild in her inmost
soul,
That he should dare her to revile before King Etzel's band
of men.
Thus she plots against the guests newly to contrive be-
gan.

Who for me, she then cried out, will Von Tronya Hagen
slay,
And will his dissevered head before me as a present
lay,
I for him with ruddy gold up will fill King Etzel's
shield ;
Also further as reward to him will land and castles
yield.

I know not why they are so slow, said the hardy fiddle-
man ;
I never in my life before saw heroes so dismayed re-
main,
When they could well hear offered them as reward so large
a sum.
Never to the king should they acceptable again be-
come,

Who in cowardly disgrace here are fed with Etzel's
bread,
And him leave thus in the lurch at the time of urgent
need ;
I a number of them see standing there in downcast
mood,
Yet acting so audaciously. Shame they never can
elude.

The mighty Etzel now in grief and heavy sorrow did remain.

He bitterly bewailed the death of his devoted friends and men.

Out of many lands there stood many warriors at his side,

Who lamented with the king the evils that did him beside.

The hardy Volker now at this began to mock in high degree:

In cowardly, unmanly tears many warriors I see.

Little help they give the king in his extremity and need.

Yet with utmost infamy long have eaten of his bread.

Then the best among them thought: That which Volker says is true.

There was none among them all who so much concern did show

As the margrave Iring did, that noble from the Danish land.

And in a very little while he the truth thereof maintained.

THIRTY - FIFTH ADVENTURE

HOW IRING FOUGHT WITH HAGEN AND WAS SLAIN

THEN the margrave Iring said, he from out the Danish
land:
On honor for this long time past I directed have my
mind,
And in storm of battle have often there achieved my
best.
Now my weapons to me bring and I Hagen will re-
sist.

That would I advise against, Hagen then to him be-
gan;
One more occasion then to moan will have King Etzel's
hardy men.
If you yourselves shall two or three venture in this hall
to show,
Down the stairs will I again send you well cut up be-
low.

Iring then still further said: Not for that will I re-
frain;
As dangerous a thing indeed have I tried time and
again.
Without assistance I alone with my sword will thee with-
stand,
Had even more been done in strife by thine than any other
hand.

Fully armed Sir Iring was in knightly fashion as of
old,
As was mighty Irnfried too, the Thuringian knight so
bold,
Whom the powerful Hawart joined with about a thousand
men,
Who to Iring help would bring in what that hero had be-
gun.

Then the fiddle-player saw a powerful and armed
band,
In gallant Iring's company coming in their armor
grand.
Firmly fastened on they wore brightly shining helmets
good.
Volker then became thereat very wrathful in his
mood.

See, friend Hagen, then he said, Iring there doth us be-
sieve,
Who in combat you alone boldly promised to en-
gage.
Do a hero lies become? Truly this I much de-
plore;
Fully armed there march with him a thousand warriors or
more.

Do not me with lying tax, answered Hawart's valiant
man.
Ready now I stand to do what I told you should be
done.
By cowardice shall not my word in any manner broken
be.
However gruesome Hagen is alone to meet him I
agree.

Iring begged of friends and men, falling down before their feet,

Him alone to now permit the dreaded warrior to meet.

This unwillingly they did, for fully did they understand

The overweening pride and might of Hagen of Burgundian land.

Yet he entreated them so long that finally he had his way.

When at length his followers saw how his determination lay,

That he but after honor strove they then let him forward go.

Thence, upon the part of both did a bitter struggle grow.

Iring now, the Danish knight, raised above his head his spear.

Himself protected with his shield that intrepid swordsman dear.

Then with violence he ran at Hagen there before the hall;

From the two now, when they met, arose a mighty noise and brawl.

With tremendous force his spear from his hand did each one hurl,

Through the strong and solid shields on the polished coats of mail,

So that the splinters from the hafts high above them flew in air.

Then they gripped their swords in wrath, the heroes who so much did dare.

The bold Hagen's mighty strength beyond all measure
did abound;
Iring yet so hard him struck that all the castle did re-
sound:
Banquet-hall and every tower echoed from the blows and
din;
Still could not the warrior carry out his purpose
then.

Iring was compelled to let Hagen there unhurt re-
main.
On the fiddle-player then he a charge to make be-
gan.
Him he thought to overcome with his awful, savage
blows;
But how to guard his safety now well the gallant sword-
man knows.

So hard the fiddle-player struck that from his buckler's
solid band
Far away the clasps flew off, from the force of Volker's
hand.
Then he left him too alone; he was indeed an awful
man.
And to the Burgundian king, Gunther, now he quickly
ran.

Each of them in combat could himself well for strife
dispose.
However Gunther Iring smote or he on Gunther dealt his
blows,
Not from any wound he made did one of other draw the
blood.
Their harnesses prevented this; they were much too strong
and good.

Gunther left he now alone and upon Gernot he
ran.

Fire from out his armor's links he with force to hew
began.

He, thereat, from Burgundy, the truly powerful
Gernot,

Then an almost fatal blow the bold impetuous Iring
smote.

Now from the prince away he sprang; he with swift energy
was filled.

Then four of the Burgundians the hero dexterously
killed,

Belonging to the retinue from out of Worms upon the
Rhine.

Thereover could brave Geiselher not well to greater rage
incline.

Lord Iring, by the living God, shouted out young
Geiselher,

Me you now must recompense for all who dead are lying
here

Before you, at this very hour. Then he at him swiftly
ran,

And the Danish hero struck so that he to reel
began.

Down he fell, at his strong hand, upon the floor amid the
blood;

And it was thought by every one that this intrepid sword-
man would

Never more in warlike strife a blow deliver with his
sword.

Yet before Prince Geiselher uninjured lay the Danish
lord.

From his helmet's buzzing sound and the clanging of his sword,
Were all the senses that he had so utterly bewildered made,
That even of his life itself the hardy knight could not have known.
This to him the mighty strength of young Geiselher had done.

As soon as ever from his head the whirring noise away had cleared,
Which from that terrific blow so terrible at first appeared,
Then within himself he thought: I live without a wound to show,
And now first the wondrous strength of bold Geiselher I know.

He about upon all sides heard his foemen standing there.
If they at the time had known worse would he have had to bear.
Also he of Geiselher conscious was as he stood by.
He thinking was how with his life from his foes he now could fly.

How the swordsman raging then from the blood and carnage sprang!
His great agility, indeed, might he most profusely thank.
Then he swiftly from the house ran to where he Hagen found;
And him gave with well-trained hand rapid blows severe and sound.

Then thought Hagen to himself: Thou of death shalt be
the prey.
Thee the devil must protect, or thou from me canst not
away.
And yet Hagen Iring struck through his helmet's sturdy
guard;
Which with Waska he achieved, a weapon good as ever
made.

Soon as Hagen felt the wound then that most ferocious
knight
The sword he carried in his hand to swing began with all
his might.
Hawart's man was then compelled rapidly from him to
flee;
And Hagen down the flight of steps began to follow quick
as he.

Then high up above his head the flying Iring swung his
shield.
And had the flight of stairs in truth thrice as many steps
have held,
Yet would Hagen not allow him to strike a single
blow.
Oh, what rosy colored sparks off his shining helmet
flew!

This notwithstanding, to his friends Iring came all safe
and sound.
Whereof the marvel of the tale its way unto Kriemhilda
found,
What the hardy Danish knight to Hagen had in com-
bat done.
For this the daughter of a king profusely him to thank
began.

God, Sir Iring, thee reward, hero worthy to be
praised.

Thus my heart thou hast consoled and my spirits greatly
raised.

Stained and red with his own blood Hagen's armor now
I see.

From his hand Kriemhilda took herself his shield in
ecstasy.

Your thanks in smaller measure give, Hagen to the queen
began.

As yet there is not very much about the matter to be
said.

Should he try it once again he would be a valiant
man.

Little will the wound you serve I from him so far have
won.

That you by reason of my wound see my harness colored
red,

Simply urges me the more to fight and leave your heroes
dead.

Till now I angry have not been with him and many
another one.

Your swordsman Iring unto me little injury hath
done.

Against the wind then stood the knight Iring of the
Danish land;

He in his harness cooled himself, loosening his helmet
band.

The people all applauded him for valor of the highest
kind,

Whereby the margrave very much was lifted up in heart
and mind.

Iring said to them again: Devoted friends, you now must
 go
 And to me new weapons bring. Once again I will you
 show
 If I am able to subdue this proud and overweening
 man.
 Out of shape his shield was hewed; now a better still he
 gained.

Soon the warrior was armed in stronger form for self-
 defence.
 In his anger then he seized a sturdy spear of excel-
 lence,
 With which he Hagen to oppose yet another time was
 prone.
 Weal and honor had he gained had he but it left
 alone.

Hagen was not in the mood still to stand and him
 await.
 Full of rage, with biting taunt he forward ran his foe to
 meet
 To the bottom of the stairs; his state of mind was
 furious.
 The swordsman Iring's forces now were to him of little
 use.

Each the other's shield so struck that in a blaze they
 seemed to be,
 Amid a wind of fiery red. Hawart's vassal, sad to
 say,
 From the sword in Hagen's hand had so dangerous a
 wound,
 Through his helm and buckler both, that never after was
 he sound.

When the swordsman Iring then became conscious of his wound,
He held his shield above his helm; thus his head protection found.
The hurt that he had thus received methinks was very grave he knew;
Shortly after worse by far to him did Gunther's liegeman do.

Hagen down before his feet lying there a javelin found;
This he then took up and threw at Iring of the Danish land,
So that now from out his head the handle to project was seen;
A fearful end to life he had through that mighty man,
I ween.

Iring was by this compelled to fall back on his Danes again.
Ere his helmet from the knight could be in any way withdrawn,
The spear was broken from his head; then his death was very near.
Sadly this bemoaned his friends; truly was their need severe.

Then the queen, Kriemhild, came nigh, and the dying man was shown;
She began without delay the valiant Iring to bemoan.
Greatly she bewailed his wounds; sorrowful she was and grave.
Then in presence of his friends said the warrior so brave:

Do not your servant thus bewail, noble and illustrious
queen.

What will all your weeping do? Away my life is quickly
seen

To dwindle, from the cruel wounds that open on me I re-
tain.

Death no longer me permits with you and Etzel to
remain.

To his Thuringians and Danes then he turned and to them
said:

The presents promised by the queen, her gold so very
bright and red,

Let not your hands permitted be in any manner to re-
ceive;

If you dare Hagen to resist you but death will then
achieve.

Now became his color pale; a certain sign of death's ap-
proach,

The brave, intrepid Iring bore; grief on all sides did
encroach.

Never could his health regain Hawart's brave, heroic
man.

The Danish heroes now must go and the strife begin
again.

Irnfried and Sir Hawart both, quickly sprang before the
hall,

With, indeed, a thousand men. A violent and noisy
brawl

Could be heard on every side as over all the sounds were
whirled.

Oh, what sharply pointed spears were at these Burgundians
hurled!

The brave and hardy Irnfried then at the minstrel quickly
ran,
Whereby he damage very great from his valiant hands
did gain.
The hardy fiddle-player soon struck the noble landgrave
through
His good helmet thick and strong. He of wrath was full
enow.

In return Sir Irnfried gave the furious minstrel such a
blow,
That from his polished shirt of mail rings in numbers fell
below.
From the sparks his harness looked as colored all a fiery
red.
Yet the noble landgrave fell before the sturdy minstrel
dead.

Hagen and Sir Hawart now had together come at
last;
One who this observed might see the wondrous feats that
there now passed.
Now in both the heroes' hands fell their weapons heav-
ily.
And therein Hawart met his death before the man from
Burgundy.

Thuringians and Danes at once saw their masters lying
dead;
Then arose before the house strife more horrible in-
deed,
Ere by downright force of arms they up to the door had
won.
Many a shield and helmet good thereby to pieces had been
hewn.

Give way, the sturdy Volker cried, and grant them entrance
to the hall;
What they at present have in mind will not, however, yet
befall.
They speedily will be compelled their precious lives to
yield herein;
And in dying they will earn what was promised by the
queen.

When the too courageous men within the hall themselves
did show,
More than one who thus had come quickly found, with
head laid low,
Death him staring in the face under swift blows given
there.
Bravely fought the bold Gernot, as also did young Geisel-
her.

Four beyond a thousand men in the house did make their
way;
Of the shining, humming swords one heard the clangor on
that day;
Yet every one who came therein by the guests was left for
dead.
The greatest wonders might indeed of those Burgundians
be said.

Over all strict silence reigned; the mighty tumult died
away.
Blood about on every hand through the openings found its
way
To the lower gutter stones, from the swordsmen dead
therein.
This the warriors from the Rhine all by mighty blows had
done.

Again to rest then sat they down, the heroes from Burgundian land.

With their shields they laid aside all their weapons out of hand.

Still outside before the house stood the hardy minstrel knight,

Watching there lest any one should hither come with them to fight.

The king exceedingly bewailed, as also did the noble queen.

Maidens, too, and stately dames in affliction there were seen.

Death, I verily believe, an oath against them all had sworn;

For yet by these intrepid guests was life from many a warrior torn.

THIRTY - SIXTH ADVENTURE

HOW THE QUEEN HAD THE HALL SET ON FIRE

TAKE ye now your helmets off, then the swordsman
Hagen said.

I and my companions will over you keep careful
guard.

If King Etzel's warriors come to prove us once
again,

Warning I my lords will give without delay as best I
can.

Now from his head the helmet took many a knight both
brave and good.

Then they quickly seated were upon the bodies in the
blood

Of those who, by their sturdy hands, had so lately there
been killed.

Then were all the noble guests seen by those with hatred
filled.

Ere the evening had arrived provided was it by the
king,

And Kriemhilda too, the queen, that the Huns should try
to bring

Again the conflict to a head. Assembled there before them
now

Fully twenty thousand men, ready to the strife to
go.

Upon the guests was then let loose a tempest horrible indeed.

Hagen's brother Dankwart now, man of noble aim and deed,

From his masters sprang at once toward the foes before the door.

They in truth supposed him dead, yet again him safe they saw.

That terrific strife endured till the darkness did it end.

The guests in noble manner fought, themselves to worthily defend,

Against King Etzel's warriors, the whole of that long summer day.

Oh, what heroes brave and good now in death before them lay!

At summer solstice of the sun the awful massacre fell out;

For the sorrows of her heart Kriemhilda retribution sought

Upon the nearest of her kin, and many another valiant man,

By which King Etzel nevermore peace of mind or gladness won.

Not at all intended she such butchery to bring about.

When the contest she began she of nothing further thought,

Than that Hagen there, alone, would his blood be forced to shed.

Some evil demon so arranged that over all it should be spread.

Past that summer day had gone; troubles now did them surround.

How much better, then, they thought, would a sudden death be found,

Than so long a time to be tortured in unyielding grief.

Peace to make did now desire those proud knights so keen in strife.

Unto them they begged to bring the mighty king before the hall.

Then the heroes red with blood, and blackened with the rusty steel,

Took their way outside the house, with the three kings at their head,

Knowing not to whom to speak of their heavy grief and need.

Both together hitherward Etzel and Kriemhilda came.

All the country was their own; thus grew the king in power and fame.

Then he to his guests well spake: What do you now wish of me?

Is it peace that you desire? Very hard will that now be.

After such great injury as to me you now have done,

That you never shall enjoy, long as in me life doth run.

Because my child you basely slew, and many of my friends beside,

Peace or truce by me to you thus shall ever be denied.

Necessity held us in bonds, to him in answer Gunther
said.

All of my brave retinue lay before thy heroes
dead,

In the lodgings them assigned. Merit I such pay from
thee?

Hither in good faith I came, trusting in thy love for
me.

Then added he from Burgundy, brave and youthful Geisel-
her:

Ye heroes of King Etzel here, who yet alive among us
are,

Of what is it you me accuse? To you what have I ever
done?

I, who in all friendliness the journey to this land be-
gan.

By thy friendliness, they said, see we all the castle
filled

With sorrow, and the land the same. Envy would us not
have thrilled

If thou hither had not come, away from Worms upon the
Rhine.

Fully orphaned is the land, in very truth, by thee and
thine.

Angrily King Gunther said, caring not whom he
offend:

If this slaughter you consent peacefully to now sus-
pend

With us deserted, homeless ones, it will indeed be well for
both;

It is quite unmerited, what to us King Etzel
doth.

Answered then the host his guests: My affliction and your
grief
One another are unlike; this great necessity for
strife,
The injuries, and cruel shame, that from you I have to
bear;
Living never one of you, on this account, shall hence re-
pair.

Further said unto the king, brave Gernot, for woe or
weal:
Now may God your heart dispose tenderly with us to
deal.
Make us room before the house and toward you let
us go.
That our lives will speedily be forfeited we fully
know.

Whatever is with us to be let it swiftly come to
hand.
You unhurt so many have that you can surely us
withstand,
And from this terrific strife all our lives with ease ob-
tain.
How long wish you us warriors in this affliction to re-
main?

Among King Etzel's warlike host it had almost come
about
That they willing were to let all those heroes hence pass
out.
When Kriemhilda this had learned in great grief did she
abide;
Then to these poor homeless ones promptly was all peace
denied.

Nay, my noble warriors, respecting what you have in
thought,

Earnestly do I advise that you it never carry
out.

If these knights, lusting after blood, ever you let from that
hall,

Then, alas, will all your friends be compelled in death to
fall.

If alive should none be left but the sons of Uta
there,

Should my noble brothers come once without to taste the
air,

And thus cool their coats of mail, you would then of hope
be shorn;

For bolder swordsmen never yet have upon the earth been
born.

Then said the youthful Geiselher: Fair and lovely sister
mine,

How could I have ever thought that you would me across
the Rhine,

Hither to this land invite, to bring upon me such great
woe?

How have I ever from the Huns merited to death to
go?

I ever have been true to thee, caused thee never any
grief.

Also hither to thy court have I come in firm
belief

That, beloved sister mine, thou wert well disposed to
me.

Now unto us thy mercy grant, since otherwise it cannot
be.

You no mercy will I show; disfavor I myself have won.

Von Tronya Hagen unto me such injury at home hath done;

Also here, within this land, he my only son hath slain;

Thus I claim a recompense from the heroes who remain.

If only Hagen unto me you will as a captive give,

I no longer will refuse all the rest to let still live;

For you all my brothers are, us the same good mother bore.

I of satisfaction then with these heroes will confer.

God in heaven that forbid, to this the noble Gernot said.

Were we yet a thousand strong, all of us would rather dead

Here before thy friends now lie, than to thee a single man

Surrender as a prisoner; that never will by us be done.

Though we all be forced to die, Geiselher did then contend,

No one us shall separate; we will knightly us defend.

Who with us may wish to fight will ever ready find us here.

I never will betray my trust to any of these friends so dear.

Here the gallant Dankwart spake, what became him well
to say:

Here my brother Hagen will not alone among you
stay.

They who peace now us deny yet may well their conduct
rue;

You will clearly yet perceive that I the truth have told to
you.

Then the regal daughter said: Heroes, ye so brave and
strong,

Go ye quickly up the stairs, and thoroughly avenge our
wrong.

I ever ye for that will serve, as with reason good I
ought.

Hagen's savage wantonness shall a lesson now be
taught.

From the house let not escape one of all the swordsmen
there,

And I now will have the hall at its corners four set
fire.

Thus the sorrow of my heart will vindicated well have
been.

Soon King Etzel's warriors ready for the work were
seen.

Those who on the outside stood drove they back within
the hall,

With heavy blow and lance's thrust. Then arose a mighty
brawl;

Still they could not separate the princes and their ret-
inue.

They, for sake of loyalty, kept together firm and
true.

Etzel's wife commanded, now, the hall forthwith to set on fire.

Tortured in the glowing flames the bodies of the heroes were.

The house was soon a burning heap, as by the wind the flames were blown.

Never was such horror great by any host of people known.

Woe on our extremity, the heroes on the inside cried:

Better had it been that we in the battle's stress had died.

God have mercy on us now; every one will lose his life.

Fearful vengeance for her wrongs takes the mighty Etzel's wife.

One of those within exclaimed: We verily shall soon be dead,

From this so awful smoke and fire; great our torment is indeed.

The heat intense makes me from thirst suffer such atrocious pain,

That my life I much do fear I cannot in this hell retain.

Von Tronya Hagen to them said: Noble knights, so brave and good,

Let him who is oppressed by thirst satisfy it now with blood.

In such a fearful heat as this better is it far than wine.

Here for us to drink, indeed, nothing could be found so fine.

At this a warrior then went where one lying dead he
found;
By the wound he knelt him down, and his helmet he un-
bound.
Then began he there to drink of the freshly flowing
blood;
And, though little wont thereto, found it delicate and
good.

God, Lord Hagen, you reward, said the worn and weary
man,
That from your advice I learn so excellent a drink to
gain.
Poured for me has seldom been a better satisfying
wine.
Thankful shall I be to you long as I my life re-
tain.

When the others there now heard that he it found, in
truth, thus good,
A number of them then were seen also drinking of the
blood.
The bodies of the warriors strength thereby did soon re-
gain;
Many a woman soon from this for dear friends felt bitter
pain.

Flaming brands fell heavily on the men within the
hall;
Overhead they held the shields to protect them from their
fall.
From the stifling smoke and heat they suffered most tor-
menting pain.
Haply may such misery heroes never bear
again.

Now Von Tronya Hagen said: Stand closely up against
the wall,
And do not let the fiery brands down upon your helmets
fall;
Deeper also in the blood press them under with your
feet.
A sorry festival it is to which the queen did us in-
vite.

In such danger and distress passed the night at last
away.
Watch before the house still kept he who did the fiddle
play,
And Hagen his companion dear, who leaning on their
shields did stand,
Awaiting yet still greater harm from the men of Etzel's
land.

It helped, indeed, the visitors that vaulted was the chamber
roof;
By reason of it there remained a greater number yet in
life.
Yet they by the window space suffered greatly from the
fire.
Their trials thus the swordsmen bore as pluck and honor
did inspire.

Now the fiddle-player spake: Let us go within the
hall.
Truly will the Huns believe that we have been, both one
and all,
By reason of the torture killed, they have made us un-
dergo.
Some of us there yet will be who in strife with them will
show.

Then said the Prince of Burgundy, young intrepid Geisel-
her:
The day is breaking, I believe, there doth rise so cool an
air.
If but God in heaven grant, we yet may live for happier
days.
A feast most wickedly contrived my sister Kriemhild us
displays.

Another of them also said: Already I the dawn can
see.
Since for all us swordsmen here nothing better now can
be,
Warriors, prepare yourselves for the inevitable
strife;
That, as no escape we have, we may with honor give up
life.

Reason had the king to think that all the guests within
were dead,
From the hardships they endured, and the fire about them
spread.
Yet alive, within that hall, were still six hundred hardy
men,
Than whom had never any king better swordsmen to him
won.

They who on the exiles spied had then very clearly
seen
That some of them were yet alive, howsoever great the
pain
The princes and their followers thus had been compelled
to bear.
They could in the house be seen to move in safety here and
there.

To Kriemhilda it was told that many were alive
within;
How can it be possible, asked in wrath the anxious
queen,
That any of them now survive such a fire about them
spread?
Sooner much can I believe you will find that all are
dead.

Gladly still would have gone forth the princes and their
men below,
If a sign of grace to them there any one had been to
show.
That, however, could they not find in all the Hunnen
land;
Therefore they avenged their death with a sturdy, willing
hand.

Early on the following morn grim the greeting they were
bid,
With onslaught terrible indeed; their sore strait them to
this led.
At them in the fight was thrown many a sharp and pointed
lance,
Yet the warriors therein made a wonderful de-
fence.

The courage of King Etzel's men excited was to high
degree,
That they now, perchance, might earn and fair Kriem-
hilda's prizes see,
And also carry out the whole of what their prince com-
manded had.
Yet a number of them there from the ranks soon fell
out dead.

Of these promises and gifts many wonders could be
told.
To be on shields before her brought she ordered quantities
of gold,
Of which to each she freely gave who a present now would
take.
Never, for one's enemies, were treasures wasted half so
great.

A mighty host of warriors, fully armed, marched to the
door.
The fiddle-player then outspoke: We are yet remaining
here.
So willingly I never saw heroes forward come to
fight,
As you, because of Etzel's gold dangled thus within your
sight.

Then many a brave one shouted forth: Nearer to the strife
we run!
Since we warriors all must fall, let it speedily be
done.
Here can not a soul remain but his life will have to
yield.
Then with lances in them stuck full at once was every
shield.

Further what is there to say? A body of twelve hundred
men
Now attempted up and down to cut their way with swords,
within.
With heavy blows upon the foe cooled the strangers well
their mood.
Peace there was no hope for now; then was seen to flow the
blood

From the deep and mortal wounds, whence were many warriors slain.

Every one for some lost friend heard was loudly to complain.

Of the noble Etzel's host the brave men perished every one.

Thus their loved friends had for them only grief and sorrow won.

THIRTY - SEVENTH ADVENTURE

HOW RUDIGER WAS SLAIN

THE men so far away from home in the morning well
had fought.

Gotalinda's lord by now had come hither to the
court,

And, whichever side he looked, saw distress the most
severe.

Thereat lamented inwardly the good and loyal
Rudiger.

Oh, woe indeed, the hero said, that I to life was ever
born!

And no one here can now prevent the great calamity we
mourn.

Gladly as I peace would make, would the king not have it
so.

More and more he sees the harm he is forced to
undergo.

A messenger to Dieterich sent the good Sir
Rudiger,

To see if they could not this now from the noble king pro-
cure.

He from Berne him answer sent: Who could in the matter
speed?

Most unwilling Etzel is that any one should in-
tercede.

A warrior among the Huns who Rudiger saw standing
there
With his eyes bedewed with tears, as did he often now
appear,
To the queen spake earnestly: Now see how solemnly he
treads,
Whom Etzel and your royal self raised above all other
heads;

And at whose service everything, land and squire alike, is
placed.
How is it that to Rudiger so many castles can be
traced,
Of which he such a number hath from our noble king
received?
For in all these wild assaults he hath no noble deed
achieved.

To me it seem he little cares what we are called on to
endure,
If, according to his will, he plenty for himself se-
cure.
We hear that he more valiant is than any other whom we
know;
Little in these stirring times hath he done us that to
show.

With his heart oppressed by grief, that trustworthy, loyal
man,
When he these words spoken heard, looked fully in the
face the Hun.
Thou for that, he thought, shalt pay. Coward sayest
thou I am?
At the court too loud hast thou uttered that most odious
name.

Quickly doubled he his fist; on the Hun he swiftly
ran,
And so forcibly he struck with skilful blow the false-tongued
man,
That at once, before his feet, on the earth he fell down
dead.
Thus augmented were, anew, the troubles round King Etzel
spread.

Cowardly villain, hence with thee, cried to him Sir Rudi-
ger.
Already in my heart I had enough of sorrow and of
care.
If with thee I did not fight, darest thou me blame for
that?
To the guests I might have borne, justly too, a foeman's
hate.

Everything that I could do, I surely should to them have
done,
Had I not King Gunther's men, myself, the passage hither
shown.
Since their escort here I was into this my master's
land,
I cannot lift in angry strife against them my unhappy
hand.

To the noble margrave said the good King Etzel an-
grily:
A fine way this to bring us help, brave and noble Rudi-
ger!
We had already of the dead so many here within our
land,
That more, forsooth, we needed not: him unjustly struck
your hand.

Answered him the noble knight: He vexed me to my very
soul,
And reflection dared to cast upon my honor, and the
toll
I, from thy most noble hands, so plentifully have re-
ceived.
Hence the lying miscreant hath his just desert
achieved.

Then arrived the noble queen, who herself had also
seen
What had, from the hero's scorn, happened to the luckless
Hun.
Sadly she bemoaned the deed; her eyes were wet with many
a tear;
She to Rudiger now said: How have we deserved that
here

To the king and me alike you thus should greater sorrow
bring?
You us, most noble Rudiger, promised that in every-
thing
Ever you for us would risk as well your honor as your
life.
And many warriors, I hear, give you the prize for skill
in strife.

I now remind you of the oath that to me confirmed your
hand,
When you to Etzel me advised, knight who over all doth
stand,
That you would be at my behest until were one or other
dead.
For me, poor woman, verily never was such urgent
need.

I cannot possibly deny that I swore, most noble
queen,
Both my honor and my life you to give with mind se-
rene;
But I never promised you that I for you would lose my
soul.
It was I who brought these lords to this unhappy festi-
val.

Remember, Rudiger, she said, the consecrated oath
divine,
Of thy unmoved fidelity; how all injuries of
mine
Thou wouldst ever me avenge, long as you or I should
live.
In reply the margrave said: I ever would you service
give.

Etzel then, the mighty king, began the margrave to en-
treat.
Now, indeed, both threw themselves at the hardy swords-
man's feet.
Then the noble Rudiger in the greatest grief was
seen.
The ever-faithful warrior ruefully to speak be-
gan:

Oh, misery, unhappy me, that I have lived to see this
day!
Of honor now must every trace be mercilessly cast
away,
All virtue and fidelity, commanded me by Provi-
dence.
O God in heaven, woe is mine, that death will not remove
me hence!

Whichever side I now may leave, that to the other I may
 go,
 There nothing can, in either case, but dire evil to me
 flow.
 Whatever I may do, or leave, all the world will yet me
 blame.
 Would but God enlighten me from whom my life and being
 came!

Him so urgently implored mighty Etzel and his
 wife,
 That of all the swordsmen there many a one must lose his
 life
 At Sir Rudiger's strong hand; the hero too himself was
 killed.
 Now may you soon understand with what grief his end
 was filled.

Shame and suffering he knew must be all that he could
 win;
 And the valiant knight, indeed, would the noble king and
 queen
 Have with best of will refused. Fear possessed the hero
 bold,
 Lest, if one of them he slay, in horror would the world
 him hold.

Then the bold, intrepid man said unto the noble
 king:
 What from thee I ever gained, take back, Lord Etzel, every-
 thing,
 All the castles and the land; nothing shall with me re-
 main;
 On my feet will I go forth to penury and bitter
 pain.

Stripped of all that I once held I forever quit your
land;
Both my daughter and my wife take I with me hand in
hand,
Ere, without fidelity, I will go my death to
meet.
Of your gold to have received surely was an evil
fate.

Then to him King Etzel said: Who will come to succor
me?
All the people and my land, everything I give to
thee
If thou only, Rudiger, me avenge upon my
foes.
Thou by Etzel surely shalt as a king thyself dis-
close.

Answered him the margrave thus: How can I do them any
harm?
Beneath my roof as they here came in good faith took I
all of them;
Food and drink, in very sooth, I offered them for friend-
ship's sake,
And I presents gave them too. Ought I now their lives to
take?

Perchance, indeed, the people think that courage I have
laid aside.
Any service I could give never was to them de-
nied.
If them now I go and fight, wickedly would that be
done.
Of the friendship I repent that with them I now have
won.

To the swordsman Geiselher my daughter gave I for his
bride.

She could not, in all the earth, with better husband be
supplied,

If birth and honor we regard, or riches and fidel-
ity.

Never in so young a king such wealth of virtue did I
see.

Then Kriemhilda said again: Brave and noble Rudi-
ger,

Pity now upon us take for all the bitter grief we
bear,

Both the king and I his wife. Let with you the thought
remain,

That never did a host on earth such sorrow from his guests
obtain.

The margrave then began to say unto Etzel's noble
wife:

Rudiger, to-day, is forced to recompense with limb and
life,

What you ever and the king of benefit to him
have done.

For all of this I now must die; my life cannot much
longer run.

Ere this day is past I know that all my castles and my
land

Must to you vacated be by this your subject warrior's
hand.

Grace I thus beseech you both for my wife and only
child,

As well as all the homeless ones, with whom is now Bech-
laren filled.

God reward thee, Rudiger, answered then the noble king.

Both to him and to the queen exceeding joy his words did bring.

Looked after well by us shall be all the people that are thine.

But, by my honor, I believe fortune now on thee will shine.

On the hazard of the die thus he put his soul and life.

Thereupon began to weep Etzel's false and lovely wife.

I the oath must keep, he said, that I unto you did plight.

Oh, woe for my devoted friends! loath am I with them to fight.

From the king he now was seen in deep distress to go away.

His valiant warriors he found standing at his side close by.

Go, he said, and arm yourselves, all who stand in my command;

The valorous Burgundians I, alas, must now withstand.

For the weapons to be brought called the heroes out of hand.

If it shield or helmet were all were ready at command,

And quickly by the servitors were before the warriors borne.

Soon the sad intelligence to the strangers proud had gone.

Fully armed was Rudiger, with five hundred of his
men,
Besides a dozen sturdy knights whom to help him he had
won.
They the prize desired to win when the battle's storm
waxed high;
Little then did they suspect that death to them was very
nigh.

With helmet bound upon his head was the margrave seen to
march.
Of those in Rudiger's command sharpened swords were
worn by each.
Also in their hands were borne shining bucklers stout and
broad.
This the fiddle-player saw, to whom it evil did fore-
bode.

Then the youthful Geiselher saw the father of his
bride
Come with helmet fastened on. What thought could in his
heart abide
Than that he meant unto them true and faithful still to
be?
Thereat felt the noble king a joyful thrill of ec-
stasy.

Well for me to have such friends, said the happy Geisel-
her,
As we were able, happily, to gain upon our journey
here.
For the sake of my fair wife has this help to us been
brought.
Joyful am I, by my faith, that this betrothal came
about.

Why do you so much rejoice? asked the fiddle-player there.

When did you in cause of peace so many heroes see draw near,

With their helmets on their heads, shield on arm, and sword in hand?

Merit will he at our cost all his castles and his land.

Ere an ending had been made to what the fiddle-player said,

Was the noble margrave seen before the building to have sped.

From his arm the shield he let, and put it down before his feet.

To refuse he then was forced in happy wise his friends to greet.

Then the noble Rudiger called to those within the hall:

Ye intrepid Nibelungs, guard yourselves now, one and all.

Of service should I be to you, yet must make you suffer pain.

Friends in former times we were; no longer faith can I retain.

This announcement filled with fear those who such heavy sorrow bore.

All their hope of aid had gone, which they cherished had before,

Since compelled were they to fight with one to whom they each bore love.

They already from their foes had grief and misery enough.

God in heaven now forbid, said King Gunther, then much
moved,
That to the friendship we had sworn you a traitor shall be
proved,
And to that fidelity in which had we such perfect
trust.
Such infamy you will not show, that indeed believe I
must.

Alas, I cannot it prevent, the bold and hardy man
replied.
I am forced to fight with you, I myself by oath have
tied.
Swordsmen, now defend yourselves if you value put on
life.
Me from this will not release Etzel's great and noble
wife.

Too late to us your warning comes, said the king as he
stood there;
God Almighty you requite, brave and noble Rudi-
ger,
For all the loyalty and love you to us so well have
shown,
If now indeed unto the end it your faithful heart en-
throne.

You we will forever thank for all that you to us did
give,
I and all of these my friends, if you but only let us
live;
The gifts magnificent and grand, when you us con-
ducted here,
In honest faith to Etzel's land; think on these, brave Rudi-
ger.

Gladly I to you would grant, said the swordsman Rudiger,
 That my gifts, in truth, on you I more fully might confer,
 As I well should like to do. Willingly would I do that,
 If therefrom I should not gain Queen Kriemhilda's bitter hate.

Noble Rudiger, forbear, spake again the Prince Gernot;
 Never could a host be found, who to his guests did so devote
 Himself in kind and friendly wise, as you once to us have shown.
 This shall to your profit be if we hence to go are known.

Would to God, my brave Gernot, the luckless Rudiger then said,
 That you again were at the Rhine, and I within my coffin dead,
 Without my honor sacrificed, since I now must you withstand.
 Never yet a swordsman did so badly fare at friendship's hand.

God reward thee, Rudiger, further yet said Prince Gernot,
 For thy rich and ample gifts. Thy death my sorrow would promote;
 For with you would be destroyed a valiant soul of noble mood.
 Here the weapon now I bear thou me gavest, swordsman good.

Never hath it fallen short in our whole distress and
need.

Many a knight before its edge hath hereunder fallen
dead.

It finely tempered is and strong, of a royal kind, and
good.

Verily, so rich a gift spare again no warrior
would.

An you from this will not forbear, but are resolved us to
assail,

If any of my friends you slay who with me their lot
bewail,

Then will I, with your own sword, take undoubtedly
your life.

You I pity, Rudiger, as well as your most noble
wife.

God permit, my Lord Gernot, that it so may come to
pass;

And according to your wish everything with us take
place;

And your kinsmen all, and friends, happy here remain in
life.

To you I gladly should entrust my only daughter and
my wife.

Geiseller in answer said, lovely Uta's youngest
child:

Lord Rudiger, how can you thus? Those who here to come
have willed,

Are true and friendly unto you. A wicked thing you
undertake;

You your lovely daughter now a widow far too soon will
make.

If your warriors and you in our sore need attack us
 here,
 It were a most unfriendly deed, and little would it then
 appear,
 That I in you had greater trust than in any other
 man,
 When for my beloved wife I your lovely daughter
 won.

Do not forget your plighted troth, said again Sir Rudi-
 ger ;
 And if Almighty God, brave king, spares your life to go
 from here,
 My young daughter do not let suffer for this fault of
 mine.
 To her be merciful and true by every princely virtue
 thine.

Right gladly would I hold to that, said Geiselher, of noble
 mind.
 If, however, of my friends who within this hall you
 find,
 Any at your hands shall die, loosened then must surely
 be
 Friendship's everlasting tie betwixt your child and you
 and me.

God have mercy on us all, replied the bold, intrepid
 man.
 They then raised on high their shields, and tried to force
 their way within,
 To fall upon the visitors there within Kriemhilda's
 hall.
 Hagen from the staircase top then aloud below did
 call.

Delay for yet a little while, brave and noble Rudi-
ger,
Hagen unto him began. We would talk a little
more,
My noble masters here and I, since heavy care on us is
laid.
Meet we death in this strange land, how will that King
Etsel aid?

In great anxiety am I, Hagen further to him
said;
The buckler that Dame Gotalind gave me to use in case
of need,
Have Kriemhilda's gallant Huns already cut from my
strong hand;
Yet I brought it in good faith with me into Etsel's
land.

Oh, that God in heaven now would in mercy grant to
me,
That I might able be to bear so good a shield as now I
see
Thou at this moment hast in hand, brave and noble Rudi-
ger;
Then in battle's storm and stress, hauberk need I not to
wear.

What gladness it would be to me to at thy service place
my shield,
Dared I only offer it before the noble Queen Kriem-
hild.
Yet take it, Hagen, to thyself, bear it in thy noble
hand.
Would that thou couldst take it home into thy Burgundian
land.

When the shield so willingly he to offer him was
 led,
 The eyes of many warriors with obscuring tears were
 red.
 That good gift was the last he made; henceforward to a
 warrior
 Was never offered any boon by Bechlaren's Rudi-
 ger.

Howso ruthless Hagen was, fierce as he might be in
 mood,
 Him the gift most deeply moved, which that swordsman
 there so good,
 With his last moments drawing near, did to him so freely
 give.
 Many a brave and noble knight now with him began to
 grieve.

God in heaven you reward, brave and noble Rudi-
 ger.
 Never will on earth be seen one who can with you com-
 pare,
 Such liberal and tender gifts homeless wanderers to
 give.
 May God in his pity grant that your goodness ever
 live.

Woe is me for this sad news, spake bold Hagen then once
 more,
 We of heaviness of heart already had so much to
 bear.
 Oh, may God now pity us, if we with honored friends must
 strive.
 Then the margrave said again: Heartily it makes me
 grieve.

I will you for this requite, brave and noble Rudiger.
Whatsoever may befall from any of the warriors here,
Never shall a hand of mine you even touch in angry strife,
Though you should all from Burgundy deprive of liberty and life.

Then gravely bowed brave Rudiger; thus he his grateful thanks implied.
Freely all the people wept; they could no longer turn aside
This heartrending suffering, which from their great and sore need led.
The father of all virtues high in Rudiger the good lay dead.

From the top of the high stairs the fiddle-player Volker said:
Since Hagen, my companion here, freely with you peace hath made,
I you give the same release from any harm by my strong hand.
That you well deserved from us when we came into this land.

Noble margrave, I you beg my messenger from here to be.
The margravine, Dame Gotalind, these ornaments once gave to me,
Of red gold, that I should wear at this unhappy festival.
Now see yourself that so I do, and you as witness let me call.

Would to God in heaven above, said the gallant Rudi-
ger,
That might the noble margravine many more on you
confer.
Your message willingly indeed to my love will I con-
vey,
If ever I her see again; rest assured of that you
may.

Rudiger took up his shield when this promise he had
made.
Greatly was his soul inflamed; he the strife no more de-
layed.
On the guests forthwith he fell like a valiant war-
rior;
Upon them many weighty blows there the noble margrave
bore.

Volker and Sir Hagen both as he neared them stepped
aside,
Keeping then the plighted word the swordsmen unto him
had made.
So many brave, intrepid men he came upon about the
door,
That he hostilities began with much of wariness and
care.

Now with wonder in their thoughts let him enter, nothing
loath,
The brothers Gunther and Gernot; hardy heroes were they
both.
Geiselher aside withdrew; to him indeed it was a
grief;
He desired to live awhile, and Rudiger shunned he in
strife.

Then sprang upon their enemies those of Rudiger's command.

Bravely they were seen to march at their lord and master's hand.

Weapons with the keenest edge in their hands they stoutly bore,

Many helmets there they broke, and of shields a number more.

As well the weary warriors struck full many a rapid blow

On those who from Bechlaren came, which deep and evenly did hew

Through the sturdy harnesses, till they reached the wearers' blood.

They furnished, in that stormy fight, many a wondrous feat and good.

The noble band of foreigners was all at present in the hall;

Volker and Hagen forward sprang upon them as they came in call.

Quarter they refused to all except the one protected man.

Under their prodigious strokes blood from out the helmets ran.

The clashing of the noisy swords so loud and terrible outrang,

That, from their terrific blows, off the shields the iron sprang.

From the bucklers were the stones scattered in the blood about;

So ferociously as they never since have any fought.

Through his foes Bechlaren's lord hewed a pathway up
and down,
As with strength and skilfulness those in battle have been
known.
The deeds of Rudiger that day did well and openly pro-
claim
Him a thorough warrior, very bold and free from
blame.

Here firmly stood those warriors, the monarchs Gunther
and Gernot;
In the current of the strife many a hero dead they
smote.
Geiselher and Dankwart, too, did little care for life dis-
play;
Yet many a warrior by them was brought unto his
final day.

Also showed well Rudiger that he was powerful and
skilled,
Intrepid, and completely armed; ah, what heroes there he
killed!
This a good Burgundian saw; and from his need sprang
anger here.
And thus to noble Rudiger did death at length come very
near.

This was the mighty Prince Gernot, who the hero called
upon.
He unto the margrave said: You will not a single
man
Of all I have leave here alive, brave and noble Rudi-
ger.
Out of measure that me grieves, I it longer cannot
bear.

It may happen from your gift you some injury de-
rive,
Since of true and loyal friends you will many me de-
prive.
Face me in the combat then, noble and intrepid
man;
I will merit thus your gift as well and fully as I
can.

Ere the margrave could contrive to cut a path to where
he stood,
Many a shining coat of mail was thoroughly befouled with
blood.
Then the two who glory sought at each other swiftly
ran;
And each one to guard himself from more deadly wounds
began.

So sharp, however, were their swords that nothing could
avert a blow.
Then the swordsman Rudiger so hotly struck the King
Gernot,
Through his helmet hard as stone, that to flow began the
blood.
Then that knight so bold and good it without delay re-
paid.

Rudger's gift he swung aloft that in his hand did clearly
show.
Though he was wounded unto death, he gave him such a
mighty blow
On the helmet that he wore, and, too, through his solid
shield,
That the valiant Rudiger was compelled his life to
yield.

Never did so rich a gift worse reward than this receive.
Rudiger and Gernot, both, at that instant ceased to live,
Slain in that terrific strife, either by the other's hand.
When this mischief Hagen saw, he in fury there did stand.

The knight Von Tronya then exclaimed: An evil case we now are in.
Grief so terrible have we in losing these two gallant men,
That never can it overcome the grieving people or the land.
To us homeless ones as pledge the knights of Rudiger shall stand.

In neither side, from this time on, was mercy to the other found.
Down to earth were numbers sent who had only a slight wound,
And restored could well have been, but around was such a crowd,
That safe as otherwise they were, yet were they drownèd in the blood.

For my brother woe is me, who in death is stricken down!
What bitter and distressing news is hourly before us shown.
I also ever must bewail my fair bride's father, Rudiger.
The harm has come to both alike, and my grief is hard to bear.

When the youthful Geiselher his brother saw before him
dead,
Those who still were in the hall suffered most distressing
need.
Death, impatient, sought to find where his many followers
were;
Of those who from Bechlaren came none escaped the
slaughter there.

Gunther, and Sir Hagen, too, with them also Geisel-
her,
As also Volker and Dankwart, all of whom good swords-
men were,
Drew together to the place where the two were lying
found;
How sorrowfully there they wept, all the heroes so re-
nowned!

Death has robbed us in sad wise, said the youthful Geisel-
her.
Let us cease our useless tears, and go hence out into the
air.
Then we battle-weary men perchance may cool our coats
of mail.
That we longer live on earth God in heaven doth not
will.

Sitting some were seen to be, others on their shields did
lean,
For all again were idle now. Noble Rudger's fighting
men
Were all of them there, lying dead; the awful din had
died away.
So long this silence deep endured that Etzel was much
grieved thereby.

Woe is me for this great wrong! said the fair, illustrious queen.

Together all too long they speak. Our hated enemies within

There remain without a scratch from Rudiger's perfidious hand.

He will doubtless them conduct home to their Burgundian land.

What, King Etzel, do we gain, by letting him at all times take

Whatever he may wish to have? To honor is he not awake.

He who us should have avenged with our foes is making peace.

Volker, swordsman brave and good, before her did this answer place:

Alas, it is not as you say, noble and illustrious queen;

If to charge a lie I dared upon one so exalted seen,

I should say of Rudiger you in devilish wise had lied;

He and all his warriors peace have utterly denied.

With such good will he carried out what his master did command,

That reclines he here in death, he and all his gallant band.

Round you now, Kriemhilda, look for those on whom you would depend.

To you sincere and wholly true was Rudiger until his end.

If you do not me believe, this by you can be be-
held.
To her grief and misery, all her doubt was thus dis-
pelled:
The body of the fallen knight to King Etzel then was
brought;
Never to that monarch's men had greater sorrow come
about.

When they on the margrave looked, as before them dead
he lay,
To you no writer could describe, or find the words by which
to say,
Of all the unrestrained lament, as well of women as of
men,
That from their bitterness of heart to manifest itself
began.

Etzel's sorrow and despair so strongly unto him did
cling,
That like the roaring of a lion sounded from the mighty
king
The grievous noise of his lament. So it was, too, with his
wife.
Out of measure wept they there that Rudiger had lost his
life.

THIRTY - EIGHTH ADVENTURE

HOW DIETRICH'S WARRIORS WERE ALL SLAIN

THE lamentation all about to such a mighty volume
spread,
That the grievous sound of woe through the house and
towers spread.
Also heard it one from Berne, a vassal of King Die-
terich;
To circulate the heavy news he ran in all directions
quick.

To the prince he came and said: Give to me, Lord Dietrich,
ear;
Whatever I have yet survived, I never in my life did
hear
Such distressing cries of woe as to-day I here have
heard.
I believe the king himself to the festival hath
stirred.

Otherwise, among the folk, how should such affliction
spread?
Either Kriemhild or the king, one or other must be
dead,
By those intrepid visitors, in access of anger,
killed.
Many gallant heroes there have their eyes with tears
filled.

Thus replied the lord of Berne: All ye faithful of my
race,
Do not so overhasty be. Whatever here hath taken
place
By the homeless, exiled ones, necessity thereto hath
led.
Profit let them now by this, that a peace I with them
made.

Then the hardy Wolfhart said: To the hall will I
apace,
To ask of this sad news and learn what hath there been
taking place.
I fully then can you inform, beloved master to com-
mand,
When I there have ascertained how at present matters
stand.

Noble Dietrich then replied: If any angry shall be
found,
And stormy questions unto them one unwisely shall pro-
pound,
It too easily in soul the warriors will sorely
fret.
Therefore, Wolfhart, I wish not that you them shall
question yet.

Heilfrich he commanded, then, fast as possible to
go,
And try his best to ascertain from either Etzel's reti-
nue,
Or the visitors themselves, what had there inflicted
been.
There never was, with any folk, so great a lamenta-
tion seen.

The envoy came to them and asked: What with you hath come to pass?

For information he was told: From us now is gone, alas,

All the joy there yet was left for us in the Hunnenland.

Rudiger before you lies, slain by a Burgundian hand.

Of all who him accompanied none hath got away alive.

Nothing ever, than such news, could more fully Heilfrich grieve.

Never yet had he, indeed, such distressing tidings told.

Back to Dieterich he came, with tears and wailings manifold.

What advices do you bring? asked of him Lord Dieterich;

And so freely wherefore weep, noble swordsman, Heilfrich?

Then said the valiant warrior: Reason have I to complain;

The good and noble Rudiger these Burgundians have slain.

To this the Bernese hero said: God would never that permit.

Terrible revenge were that, and the devil's evil wit.

How could Rudiger from them such a fate have merited?

I good reason have to know that he friendship for them had.

Then the hardy Wolfhart said: If this has happened in the
strife,
Surely every one of them shall it answer with his
life.
We should be forever shamed were such a thing by us en-
dured;
Signal services on us hath Rudiger's good hand con-
ferred.

The Amelungen monarch sought fuller news for his
relief.
At a window he sat down, heavy was his heart with
grief.
Then he ordered Hildebrand to the guests his way to
trace,
To seek among those there to learn what had with them
taken place.

That warrior, inured to strife, the worthy master Hilde-
brand,
Bore no shield upon his arm, nor carried weapon in his
hand.
In height of courtesy he wished to the visitors to
go;
But now indeed his sister's child toward him did blame and
anger show.

To him the furious Wolfhart said: If you unarmed thereto
start,
You will not, without abuse, evermore from them de-
part.
You will have in depth of shame back your way to under-
take.
Go you with befitting arms; a good impression it will
make.

The elder man then armed himself, as the younger did advise.

Ere Hildebrand had it well seen, before him stood, in stately wise,

All of Dietrich's warriors, every one with sword in hand.

Vexed the hero was at this, and fain would leave the war-like band.

Whither would you go? he asked. We our way with you would go;

For if Von Tronya Hagen there himself so bold and rash should show

As to offer mocking speech, how can you greet him then with grace?

When he heard what they would say, the good knight let them keep their place.

The hardy Volker then perceived toward them coming, fully armed,

All the warriors of Berne, Dietrich's men who hither swarmed,

Girded each one with his sword, and a shield in every hand.

Of all of this he quickly told his lords from the Burgundian land.

Thus the fiddle-player spake: Yonder coming near I see,

Truly, too, in hostile wise, the vassals in Lord Dietrich's pay,

Helmets on and fully armed; they verily will us oppose.

Then with us, strangers in this land, of a truth it evil goes.

Hardly he the words had said ere Hildebrand was there to greet,
Who from his arm his shield now took and down it placed
before his feet.
Began he then at once to ask of Gunther's men full many
a one:
Misery, ye swordsmen good, with Rudiger what have ye
done?

My noble master, Dieterich, me to you doth freely
send,
To learn indeed if dead doth lie, stricken, heroes, by your
hand,
The noble margrave Rudiger, as to us is told the
news.
We such heart-sorrow could not bear if we him in truth
must lose.

To him the ruthless Hagen said: Alas, this word must
be believed.
Gladly it I would avow, if therein you were
deceived;
If for the brave knight's sake alone, would that he were
living yet,
Whom never in the world enough men and women can re-
gret.

When they fully understood that Rudiger in fact was
dead,
The warriors him then bemoaned as fidelity them
bade.
Among the men of Dieterich bitter tears were seen to
flow
Over beard e'en to the chin. They much grief did
undergo.

Siegstap, knight of Berne, outspake, a noble one and bold
in war:

Oh, woe, how all the kindly gifts over with and ended
are,

That Rudiger on us bestowed when unhappy days we
saw;

The comfort of the homeless ones from your swords is now
no more.

Then remarked an Amelung, by the name of Wolfwein
known:

If before me lying here my father's body should be
shown,

More heavy heart I could not feel than at Rudiger's sad
loss.

Alas, indeed, who can console the margravine in her dis-
tress?

The hardy Wolfhart then again in bitterness of spirit
said:

On our many knightly guests who now the warriors will
lead,

As our gallant margrave here in the past so oft hath
done?

Alas, O noble Rudiger, that thou hast thus been over-
thrown!

Wolfbrand and Sir Heilferich, with them also Helme-
not,

With their friends and kin as well, him bewailed in plaintive
note.

Nothing more, because of sighs, could further ask Sir
Hildebrand:

Swordsmen, let us now do that for which did us my master
send.

The body of dead Rudiger give us now without the
hall,
In whom hath yet our every joy met so sorrowful a
fall.
Thus let us to him requite whatever he for us hath
done
In his great fidelity, and for many a homeless
one.

We are also exiles here like the good knight Rudi-
ger.
Why compel you us to wait? Away let us his body
bear,
And in his melancholy death do honor to the noble
man,
As to him we justly might in his time of life have
done.

Gunther then to him replied: No service ever was so
good,
As a friend toward a friend hath at his departure
showed.
That call I true fidelity when man indeed doth render
it.
His love for you was absolute; you praise him only as is
fit.

How long must we here supplicate? the hero Wolfhart did
reply.
Since the best of all our hopes stricken down by you doth
lie,
We never him, oh, woe is me, more with us on earth may
have;
Then let us hence the warrior bear, and him place within
the grave.

In answer to him Volker said: None will bring him hence
to you.

You can fetch him from the house where the swordsman
brave and true,

With the deep wounds in his heart, hath fallen there in his
own blood.

Your services to Rudiger then will finished be and
good.

To this the hardy Wolfhart said: God knows, illustrious
fiddleman,

You should no further us provoke; to us you have caused
bitter pain.

If I before my master dared you for this would come in
need;

But we that must leave alone; he us to fight forbid in-
deed.

He has fear too great by far, said the fiddleman
again,

Who nothing ever will attempt that hath to him forbidden
been.

That could I never truly call befitting a bold hero's
mood.

Inwardly Sir Hagen thought the words of his companion
good.

If you do not mocking cease, the hardy Wolfhart then
began,

Your strings will I put out of tune, so that you upon the
Rhine,

If you homeward ever ride, may something have to say
of it.

Verily your bragging words with my honor do not
fit.

The fiddle-player answered then: If these fiddle-strings of mine
You of their good tones should rob, then though bright
your helmet shine,
It of a truth would clouded be from the weight of my
strong hand;
No matter how or when I go again to my Burgundian
land.

He at once would on him spring, but the passage was
not free.
His noble uncle Hildebrand held him fast with
energy.
If herein to fiercely rage thou in thy stupid anger
choose,
We the favor of our lord shall indeed forever
lose.

Master, let the lion loose, he so fierce is in his
mien;
Should he come too near to me, Volker said, the swordsman
keen,
Though with his unaided hand he the world entire had
slain,
Yet I so will strike him that he none will answer back
again.

Furious thereover grew the temper of the brave
Bernese.
Wolfhart, then, the agile man, did at once his buckler
seize,
And, like a lion in a rage, threw himself upon his
foe.
Then his band of loyal friends began to follow quickly
too.

With great bounds forsooth he came, until he won the
palace wall;
Still the aged Hildebrand reached first the staircase of
the hall.
He would not him, before himself, allow to enter on the
fight;
The visitors, as they had wished, found they ready them to
meet.

Quickly then on Hagen sprang the worthy master Hilde-
brand.
Clashing of the swords was heard in each hardy hero's
hand.
Extremely angry were they both, as very soon was clearly
shown.
From off the weapons of the two a wind of fiery red was
blown.

Separated then they were when the strife was at its
height,
By the warriors of Berne, as strength and valor did
incite.
When the master Hildebrand had from Hagen turned
away,
On Volker hardy Wolfhart ran, to force him for his words
to pay.

Upon the fiddle-player's helm so fierce a blow did he con-
vey,
That his weapon's sharpened edge through the buckles made
its way;
With violence requited that the brave and hardy fiddle-
man,
Striking Wolfhart with such force that sparks he to throw
off began.

From each other's coat of mail they of fire carved a
store,
Terrible indeed the hate each one to the other
bore.
The swordsman Wolfwein then, from Berne, came between
and parted them.
If he had not a hero been he could not the deed have
done.

Gunther, brave and noble king, with a ready, willing
hand,
Received the noted heroes from the Amelungen-
land.
Geiselher, the youthful prince, as endured the awful
fight,
Made the shining helmets there many red with blood, and
wet.

A grim and most relentless man Dankwart, Hagen's brother,
was.
What before had he in strife carried out in lordly
wise,
On King Etzel's warriors, seemed but as a breath of
air.
The son of gallant Aldrian no longer did his fury
spare.

Ritteschart and Gerebart, as well as Heilfrich and
Wischart,
In many a wild and cruel siege had taken oft a valiant
part,
As to Gunther's men they now gave a chance to clearly
know.
Wolfbrand also then was seen fearless into strife to
go.

There, as if he frantic were, fought the aged Hildebrand.

Many splendid warriors had before Sir Wolfhart's hand,

Victims of a cruel death, down to sink in their own blood.

Thus the wounds of Rudiger avenged these warriors brave and good.

There the noble Siegstab fought, as his anger did incite.

And what sturdy helmets were broken in the battle's height,

Upon his hated enemies, by Dietrich's noble sister's son!

He, in that terrific storm, could more boldly not have done.

The hardy Volker, valiant knight, just as soon as he well saw

How the valiant Siegstab caused from out the harnesses to pour

The healthy blood in rivulets, the brave man's anger was aroused.

Up against him then he sprang, and was soon thereafter lost,

From the fiddle-player's hands, the noble Siegstab's precious life.

Volker him of his great skill so noted an example gave,

That, before his trenchant sword, he in death was stricken low.

That requited Hildebrand, as his valor made him do.

Oh, misery, for this dear lord, said the master Hildebrand,
Who before us now doth lie, slain by Volker's sturdy hand!
Now that intrepid fiddleman shall no longer prosper here.
The brave and hardy Hildebrand could more savage not appear.

Then on Volker struck he so, that did from his helmet fall
Splinters out on every side, off as far as palace wall,
From the shield as well as helm, of the hardy fiddleman;
So that Volker now, therefrom, on the earth his end did gain.

Crowded then into the strife all of Dietrich's hardy men.
So savagely they fought that splints whirling all about were seen,
And the points from many a sword flying up on high did show.
They from helmets also caused rivulets of blood to flow.

Von Tronya Hagen came across the swordsman Volker lying dead;
And this he felt, indeed, to be of all the saddest loss he had,
At this unhappy festival, among his kinsmen, friends, or men.
Alas, how fiercely Hagen then bold Volker to avenge began!

No benefit from this shall gain the aged master Hildebrand.
Here doth my companion lie slain by that daring hero's hand,
The best of comrades in a fight that to me was ever sent.
He at once took up his shield, and away he slashing went.

Helferich, the mighty man, the hardy swordsman Dankwart killed.
Gunther and young Geiselher with grief unspeakable were filled
When they saw him downward go, at the height of this great strife.
Yet well had his intrepid hand avenged the loss of his own life.

However many people here assembled were from every land,
With many princes strongly armed adverse to the little band,
Yet had not the Christian folk opposition to them shown,
With their courage they could well with the heathen hold their own.

Meanwhile Wolfhart here and there cut a bloody pathway then,
Striking down upon his road what were left of Gunther's men.
For the third time now he made the round of that capacious hall,
And from his heroic hand went many a warrior to the wall.

Out the gallant Geiselher to the hardy Wolfhart
cried:
Misery, that I have here with such relentless foes to
bide!
Noble and undaunted knight, your way hither to me
wend;
No longer can I this endure, I will the matter help to
end.

In the strife brave Geiselher Wolfhart then right quickly
found.
Each warrior the other gave many a deep and ghastly
wound.
With such impetuosity Wolfhart rushed upon the
king,
That from his feet above his head could the blood be seen
to spring.

With rapid and ferocious blows the lovely Uta's youngest
son
Hardy Wolfhart there received, who such heroic pluck had
shown.
However bold the swordsman was, how might he hope suc-
cess to see?
Never could so young a king more valorous or fearless
be.

With a mighty blow he cut Wolfhart's mail completely
through,
So that from the wound received the blood began to freely
flow.
Damaged with a mortal hurt was noble Dietrich's gallant
man;
He a champion must be who could such a feat have
done.

When the hardy Wolfhart felt this so terrible a
wound,
Down he let his buckler fall, and within his sturdy
hand
He a sharp and mighty sword higher lifted in the
air.
Through his helm and coat of mail struck he the knightly
Geiselher.

To death, in its most ruthless form, had each of them the
other done;
Of the whole of Dietrich's men left alive was now not
one.
Hildebrand the aged saw Wolfhart stricken to the
floor,
And never, verily, had felt from true knight's death such
anguish sore.

Now within the hall lay dead every one of Gunther's
men,
As also those of Dieterich. Hildebrand one saw go
then
Where Sir Wolfhart, at death's call, down had fallen in the
blood.
Thereupon he put his arms around the swordsman true and
good.

He the body from the house wished away with him to
bear,
But too heavy was the load; leave it must the old knight
there.
From the blood then upward glanced the sorely wounded,
dying man;
That his uncle him would help right gladly saw he clearly
then.

Now the dying warrior said: Much beloved uncle
mine,
Me will nothing at this hour avail from any help of
thine.
You of Hagen now beware; in truth I counsel for your
good.
In his heart he ever bears a savage and relentless
mood.

Would my kinsmen and my friends me, when I am dead,
bemoan,
To the nearest and the best you, from me, to them make
known,
That for me they must not weep, that for tears there is no
ground;
At a noble monarch's hands I a glorious death have
found.

I have, too, so well repaid my death untimely in this
hall,
That will many a woman yet for some brave hero vainly
call.
Should any one you question, then, you can boldly to him
say,
That my own unaided hand did, verily, a hundred
slay.

Hagen thought in bitter mood upon the hardy fiddle-
man,
From whom the aged Hildebrand life already had now
won.
Then he to the brave man said: Now shall you repay my
grief;
From us you have by death removed many warriors bold
in strife.

Then at Hildebrand he struck so that one the sound might
hear
Of the groaning sword Balmung, that Hagen, faithless
knight, elsewhere
Wickedly from Siegfried took, when he the hero basely
killed.
The old man guarded well himself; for in fencing was he
skilled.

Wolfhart's uncle also smote, with his weapon sharp and
long,
Upon Von Tronya Hagen so that it through the metal
swung;
Yet he unable was to wound Gunther's bold intrepid
man.
Hagen then him struck again and below his harness
ran.

When he thus the wound received, was the master Hilde-
brand
Fearful that still greater harm he might have from Hagen's
hand.
Then his shield upon his back threw Lord Dietrich's valiant
man,
And the knight, though wounded sore, away from Hagen
swiftly ran.

No one now was left alive of all the swordsmen there en-
gaged,
Save Gunther and Sir Hagen bold, who many a noted battle
waged.
With blood fast running from his wounds went the aged
Hildebrand,
Bearing all the heavy news which to Dietrich he must
hand.

Sitting still, absorbed in grief, very soon he saw the
man.

Knowledge of yet greater woe did the prince from him now
gain.

When he Hildebrand had seen coming with his harness
red,

He of him asked well the cause, as his anxious soul him
bade.

Tell me, Master Hildebrand, how your coat of mail so
wet

With your life-blood has become? Now who to you hath
done all that?

Have you with the visitors fighting been within the
hall?

That had you better left alone as gave I bidding to you
all.

Then he to his master said: Hagen hath it done to
me.

He me gave, within the hall, the wounds that you upon
me see,

When I from the warrior to turn away had just be-
gun.

Hardly with my life, indeed, could I from the devil
run.

He of Berne to him replied: Rightly served you has that
deed;

For me you heard a friendship firm unto those warriors
concede.

Yet you broken have the peace which to them I did dis-
pense.

Would it not me ever shame with death you should it rec-
ompense.

Thereover with me, good Dietrich, do not too quickly anger
show;
For me, and my devoted friends, far too heavy is our
woe.
Gladly would we Rudiger from the ghastly hall have
borne,
But those whom Gunther doth command would not allow it
to be done.

Woe is me for this great grief! Is Rudiger the brave then
dead?
A sorrow that is unto me than which a worse I never
had.
The fair and noble Gotalind is my cousin's lovely
child.
Woe for those poor orphaned ones with sorrow in Bechlaren
filled!

Overcome with grief and pain, mourned he the death of
Rudiger.
He bitterly began to weep, for nothing now could him
deter.
Alas, the comrade good and true, who therein his death
has met;
King Etzel's swordsman of repute whom I never can for-
get.

Can you, Master Hildebrand, me beyond all question
tell
The name of that bold warrior who noble Rudiger did
kill?
It was done, responded he, by the hand of strong Ger-
not;
By the hand of Rudiger death to the king was also
brought.

Then to Hildebrand he said: All my men at once let
 know,
 That arm themselves they quickly must; I, in truth, will
 thither go.
 And order that they to me bring my shining armor out of
 hand.
 I myself will question now the heroes from Burgundian
 land.

Then spake forth Master Hildebrand: Who, indeed, shall
 go with thee?
 All who living now are left are standing here for thee to
 see.
 The only one now left am I; the others, every one, are
 dead.
 At this news was he alarmed; great was his distress in-
 deed.

Never in the world before such a sorrow had he
 known.
 If my subjects all, he said, in the arms of death are
 thrown,
 Then hath God forgotten me, poor, afflicted Diete-
 rich.
 Once was I a mighty king, ruling with esteem, and
 rich.

Yet again spake Dieterich: How ever came to pass this
 wrong,
 That every one of them was killed, heroes so renowned and
 strong,
 By those battle-weary men, with anxious care beset so
 hard?
 My ill fortune hath wrought this, or had death them surely
 spared.

Since then fate hath thus decreed that it so should come
about,

Tell me if, among the guests, in life may any still be
sought?

Master Hildebrand replied: God Almighty knows, there
none

Are left save Hagen bold, and Gunther, that illustrious
one.

Alas, my Wolfhart, dear and true, if from me you thus
are torn,

Soon indeed may I regret, to end of time, that I was
born;

Siegstab, and Sir Wolfwein too, also valorous Wolf-
brand;

On whom can I for help depend in the Amelungen-
land?

Then the brave Heilfrich also, if slain, from me you have
been sent,

Gebhart, and Sir Wischart too; whenever shall I cease
lament?

This of every joy on earth is for me the final
day.

Oh, woe, that in such bitter pain die thereby none ever
may.

THIRTY - NINTH ADVENTURE

HOW GUNTHER, HAGEN, AND KRIEMHILD WERE SLAIN

DIETRICH then his coat of mail looked after well with
his own hand ;
And, in arming of himself, assisted was by Hilde-
brand.
So heavily lamented then the valorous and mighty
man,
That from all the noise he made the very house to quake
began.

Soon however he regained a true, heroic state of
mind ;
Then upon himself in wrath did the knight his armor
bind.
His most solid trusty shield now he took within his
hand ;
Quickly then from there went forth he and Master Hilde-
brand.

Von Tronya Hagen then outspake : I yonder see, approach-
ing us,
Dieterich the mighty lord, who intends us to op-
pose
According to the injury we to him have lately
done.
Which rightly is the better man will, to-day, be clearly
shown.

If the swordsman Dieterich, lord of Berne, himself shall
think
So extremely strong of limb, and a man to make me
shrink,
And on us he would avenge the evil that has come to
hand,
Von Tronya Hagen thereon said, I am the one to him with-
stand.

Hagen's words Lord Dietrich heard, as well as Master
Hildebrand.
He came where he the warriors both together found to
stand,
In open air before the house, leaning there against the
wall.
His shield the noble Dieterich allowed upon the ground
to fall.

With extreme of care and grief Dietrich to the warrior
said:
Why such anguish have you brought, Gunther, now upon
the head
Of me, a homeless wanderer? What have I ever done to
you,
That every comfort I enjoyed I see myself deprived of
now?

You found it not enough, it seems, in our great distress
and loss,
That you the warrior Rudiger took by death away from
us.
Me you also must begrudge the whole of my devoted
men;
Certainly such grievous harm I to you had never
done.

Think now well upon yourselves, also on your signal
grief,
On the slaughter of your friends, all of your distress in
strife;
And me tell, you swordsmen good, are you not heavy of
your cheer?
Oh, misery, how bitter is to me the death of Rudi-
ger!

On this earth such grief as mine did no one surely ever
know.
Little thought did ye then take of either mine or your
great woe.
Now every friend I ever had lieth here, by your hands
slain.
Lament for all my kinsmen dear enough, indeed, I never
can.

We are not so culpable, said Hagen to him in re-
ply.
To us within the palace came your swordsmen in a com-
pany,
A goodly and a valiant troop, all in arms, equipped
for war.
The news of what took place was not to you in true wise
told before.

How other tale shall I believe? It was told by Hilde-
brand,
That you were asked by my good men from the Amelungen-
land,
Them to give, outside the house, the body of Sir Rudi-
ger,
And you mockingly replied to my intrepid warriors
here.

Then replied the Rhenish lord: Rudiger they wished to bear,
As they said, away from here. I their wish refused to hear,
In order Etzel to despise, not to injure your brave men,
Till thy swordsman Wolfhart there to mock us and insult began.

The Bernese hero then replied: We it must accept as right,
Gunther, now, most noble king, by the virtues of a knight,
Reparation make to me for what you given have of woe.
Gallant knight, atonement grant; unavenged it then shall go.

A captive yield thyself to me, with Hagen, thy devoted man;
You henceforth will I defend, well as mortal ever can,
That no one now among the Huns any harm to you shall do.
Of a surety you shall find I to you am good and true.

God in heaven now forbid, said Hagen to him in reply,
That two swordsmen of repute thus surrender unto thee,
Who, prepared, and fully armed, can in defence before thee stand.
Great dishonor that would be; you will not us such cowards find.

You should not me this refuse, Dieterich still further
said,
Gunther, and Sir Hagen here. Both of you for me have
made
Such bitter sorrow of the heart, such desperation of the
soul,
That you righteously will act if for this you me make
whole.

I you give my sacred word, and thereon extend my
hand,
That with you I back will ride and home conduct within
your land.
With honor will I you there lead, or my death shall have
secured;
And will, on your account, forget the injuries I have en-
dured.

Ask us not this any more, said Sir Hagen, waxing
bold.
Would you it befitting think, if of us it should be
told,
That two swordsmen so assured had surrendered to your
hand?
No one with you now is seen excepting Master Hilde-
brand.

God knows, 'Sir Hagen, that the peace, answered Master
Hildebrand,
Which my master Dieterich proffers you upon his
hand,
Of a truth the time will come, possibly with short re-
prieve,
That you gladly would accept, and cannot find it to re-
ceive.

His terms I surely would accept, Hagen quickly did re-
ply,
Ere I would, to my disgrace, so before a swordsman
fly,
Noble Master Hildebrand, as thou in recent times hath
done.
On my honor, I believed you better would withstand your
man.

Master Hildebrand then said: Why reproach you me with
that?
Who was it now that, on his shield, before the Wasgensteine
sat,
When the Spanish Walther there many of his kinsmen
killed?
You, I think, yourself, with shame have some reason to be
filled.

Noble Dietrich then rejoined: Doth it swordsmen well
befit,
With words each other to revile, like old women every
whit?
I you, Master Hildebrand, forbid to say another
word.
An exiled warrior am I, with grief enough within me
stirred.

Let me now, friend Hagen, hear, Dieterich still further
said,
On what spake you together here, ye heroes by all virtues
led,
When you saw me, fully armed, up these steps to you as-
cend?
Then you said that you, alone, me in combat would with-
stand.

No one you will that deny, to him in answer Hagen
said;
I am willing it to try, with heavy blows unlim-
ited,
Unless the Nibelungen sword in my hand to pieces
break.
I am vexed that prisoners you us both desire to
take.

When the noble Dietrich heard how greatly Hagen was
displeased,
With activity his shield the ready swordsman promptly
seized.
From the steps how rapidly to his encounter Hagen
sprang!
The trusty Nibelungen sword a merry tune on Dietrich
rang.

Well Sir Dietrich knew, indeed, how the bold and hardy
man
With an awful courage fought. To guard himself there-
fore began
The noble governor of Berne against his fierce and deadly
blows.
Hagen, he knew very well, a skilled and able swordsman
was.

Also would he shun Balmung, a weapon strong and apt to
kill.
Yet Dietrich, ever and anon, parried all his blows with
skill,
Until he Hagen in the strife had completely over-
come.
A wound terrific, deep and long, through his harness sent
he home.

Then the noble Dietrich thought: Travail hath enfeebled thee;

Little honor would it bring should I thee at present slay.

I therefore will only try if I can but thee constrain

With me to go as prisoner. Brought to pass was this with pain.

He his buckler then let fall. His strength was wonderful and great.

Round Von Tronya Hagen now he threw his arm with awful might.

Thus by him was overcome the hardy and intrepid man.

Gunther, at the sight thereof, exceedingly to grieve began.

Hagen was by Dieterich led, when he was securely bound,

Up to where Kriemhilda was. He there delivered to her hand

The bravest of all warriors who arms had ever nobly borne;

After her heart-breaking grief the greatest joy did her adorn.

Then before the swordsman bowed in delight King Etzel's wife;

Ever may you happy be, in soul and body, all your life.

You have made amends to me for all my grief and misery;

Heartily shall I you thank till death therefrom shall hinder me.

Then the noble Dietrich said: Have against his life no
thought,
Noble and illustrious queen; yet may it be brought
about,
That he by service may requite you for all that done hath
been.
To suffer must he not be made because in bonds you him
have seen.

Hagen then commanded she within a dungeon to convey,
Where him no one ever saw; there under lock the prisoner
lay.
Gunther, then, the noble king, in lofty tones to call began:
Where remains the lord of Berne? He a wrong to me hath
done.

Him to meet, at once went forth Dieterich, the lord of
Berne.
Noble Gunther's staying power served him well a knightly
turn.
Not an instant he delayed, but ran outside before the
hall.
With the clashing of their swords soon arose a mighty
brawl.

Whatever glory and renown Dietrich earned in earlier
life,
Yet in his fury so did rage Gunther in that awful
strife,
And, by reason of his loss, held such hate against the
man,
One must a miracle it call that free from danger Dietrich
ran.

They, verily, were both of them so full of courage, and so strong,
That from the heavy blows they gave the palace and the towers rang,
As on each other's solid helms terrific blows with sword they made.
Valor of a lordly kind Gunther through it all displayed.

Yet subdued him he of Berne, as had the case with Hagen been.
Through his solid coat of mail flowing blood in streams was seen,
From wounds inflicted by the sword Dietrich wielded in the fight.
The weary Gunther, ne'ertheless, himself defended like a knight.

Then the mighty king was bound by the gallant Dietrich's hand;
And was then in such a place as never should a monarch stand.
Should, he thought, he free now leave noble Gunther and his man,
That from them would death receive all on whom they after ran.

Dieterich, then, the lord of Berne, took King Gunther by the hand,
And led him bound as he now was where Kriemhilda he could find.
When him in his distress she saw, of her own grief did much depart.
Gunther, she to him then said, welcome unto me thou art.

Noble sister mine, he said, thanks I should return to
thee,
Could I in this greeting, now, a token of affection
see.
But I know, O queen, that thou art so relentless in thy
mind,
That to Hagen and to me in mockery you greeting
send.

Said again the Prince of Berne: Noble and illustrious
queen,
Never heroes of such fame as prisoners have yet been
seen,
As I to-day, O mighty queen, to your keeping have re-
signed.
From my friendship unto you may these exiles favor
find.

She gladly that would do, she said. Dietrich then his way
did go,
With his eyes bedewed with tears, from these famous heroes
two.
Badly then avenged herself great King Etzel's angry
wife;
From these noble warriors cruelly she took the
life.

Them she placed in cells apart in the prison there to
lie;
Never once again in life each other did the swordsmen
see,
Till her brother's severed head she to Hagen's presence
bore.
Kriemhild's vengeance on the two surely was most grim
and sore.

This wife and daughter of a king to where Sir Hagen was then sped.

With angry and most fiendish hate, to the warrior she said:

If to me you give again what you from me took away,

You then may able be, alive, to Burgundy to make your way.

In a fury Hagen said: Thy speech is so much wasted breath,

Noble daughter of a king; I have sworn a solemn oath,

That I the treasure will not show while in life shall yet remain

One of my respected lords; given can it be to none.

I to this will put an end, quickly said King Etzel's wife.

She bade them to her brother go, and in his prison take his life.

Beheaded was the noble man; his head she carried, by the hair,

And to the Tronyan hero showed; he was filled with grief and care.

When the sorrow-laden man looked upon his master's head,

To the wrathful Queen Kriemhild, the undaunted warrior said:

According to thy royal will thou an end to all hast brought.

Everything has come to pass as I have full often thought.

The noble King of Burgundy now by treachery is
dead;
So of youthful Geiselher, and Gernot, may too be
said.
No one knows the treasure's place save Almighty God and
me.
Devil that thou art, from thee it evermore shall hidden
be.

Then do you to me, she said, a paltry reckoning af-
ford.
I at any rate will now keep my noble Siegfried's
sword.
My beloved carried it when I looked upon him
last,
For whom the pain I have endured all other sorrows has
o'erpast.

From its sheath she drew it forth; he could not himself
defend;
From this intrepid warrior to take the life did she in-
tend.
She with both her hands it swung, and cut off at once his
head.
This the great King Etzel saw, and it him full of anguish
made.

Alas, the noble king exclaimed, how hath here been made
to fall,
By a woman's hand alone, the hero bravest of them
all
Who in combat ever fought, or his shield to battle
bore.
Although my enemy he was, for no one could I sorrow
more.

Then said Master Hildebrand: Little good shall she derive
From him daring thus to slay. Whatever I thereby receive,
Though he brought me once, myself, into most bitter pain
and scathe,
I, notwithstanding, will avenge brave Von Trönya Hagen's
death.

Hildebrand in anger then on the Queen Kriemhilda
sprang.
With a swing of his good sword he smote that daughter
of a king.
Such service from the warrior brought death and torture
to her nigh;
Little help to her was brought by her wild, impassioned
cry.

Those who there had lost their lives scattered lay in heaps
around.
The noble queen, to pieces hewn, still was lying on the
ground.
Dieterich and Etzel, both, in utmost grief to weep began,
And to bitterly bewail many a friend and faithful
man.

Heroes' highest honors there were by ruthless death laid
low;
All the people now were filled with anguish from the awful
blow.
In misery was brought to end this festival of queen and
king;
As joy doth ever in its train, at the last, much sorrow
bring.

What in aftertimes occurred can I not to you make
known,
Save that ever were in tears Christians all, and heathens,
seen;
Women, too, as well as knights, and also many a lovely
maid.
For their kinsmen hence away, most heart-breaking grief
they had.

I to you no more will tell of the great calam-
ity.
Let all those who slaughtered were, undisturbed, lie peace-
fully.
However then, in Hungary, with the folk did things pro-
ceed,
Here the story has an end: it is the Nibelungen-
lied.

THE END.

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